CHRISTMAS 2025

Better Homes Gardens®

WIN $50,000
The ultimate Christmas gift!
SEE PAGE 4

TV SHOW 7 TURN US ON!

Homemade holidays

Make cookies, wreaths, ornaments and more **PLUS** *Aussie Christmas style you'll love!*

Affordable, faux BLOOMS *make* *festive* magic

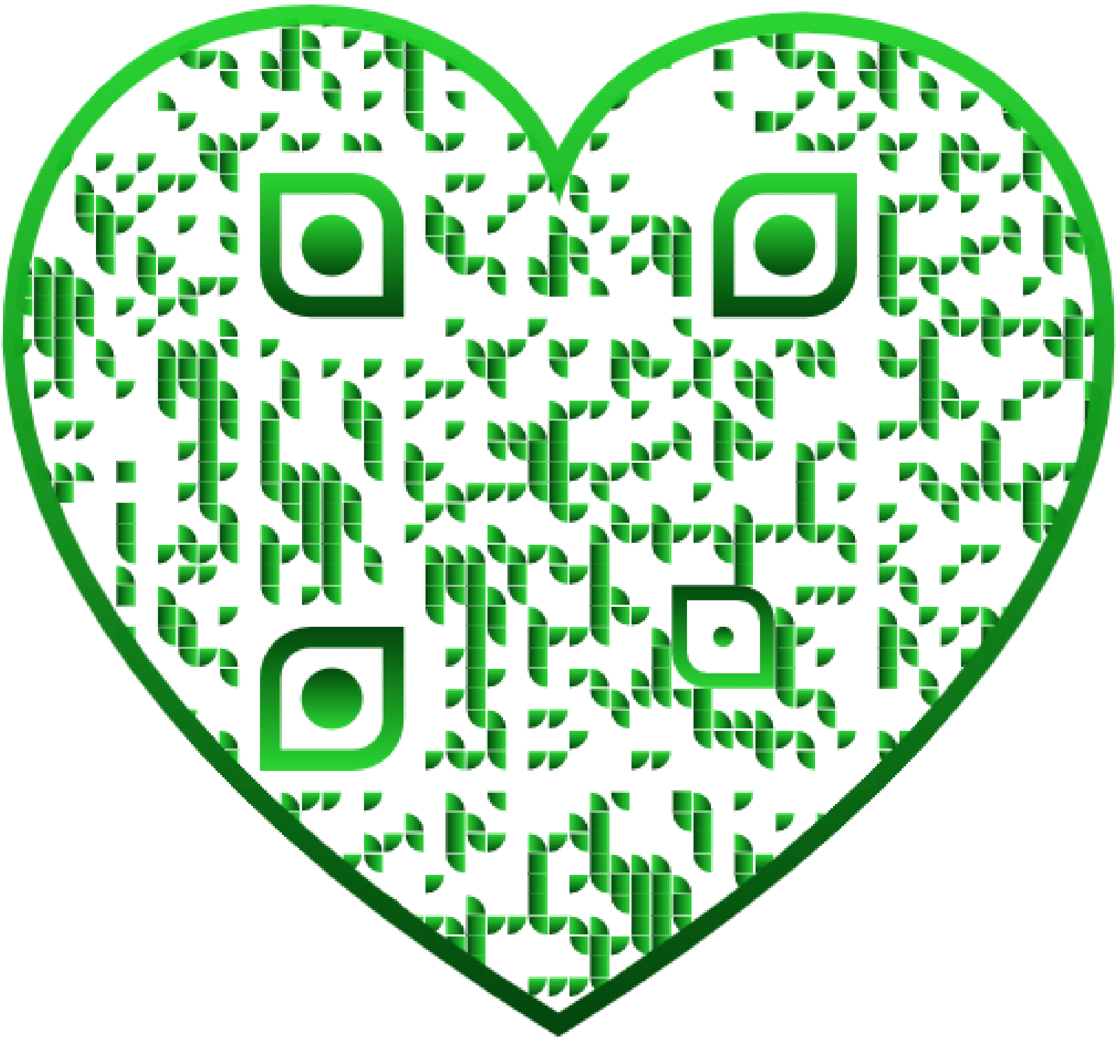
Air fryer feast

& a prep ahead menu, guide to gravy, and recipes from Matt Moran

Make this Santa sack with Geneva!

This Christmas is slow & SWEET

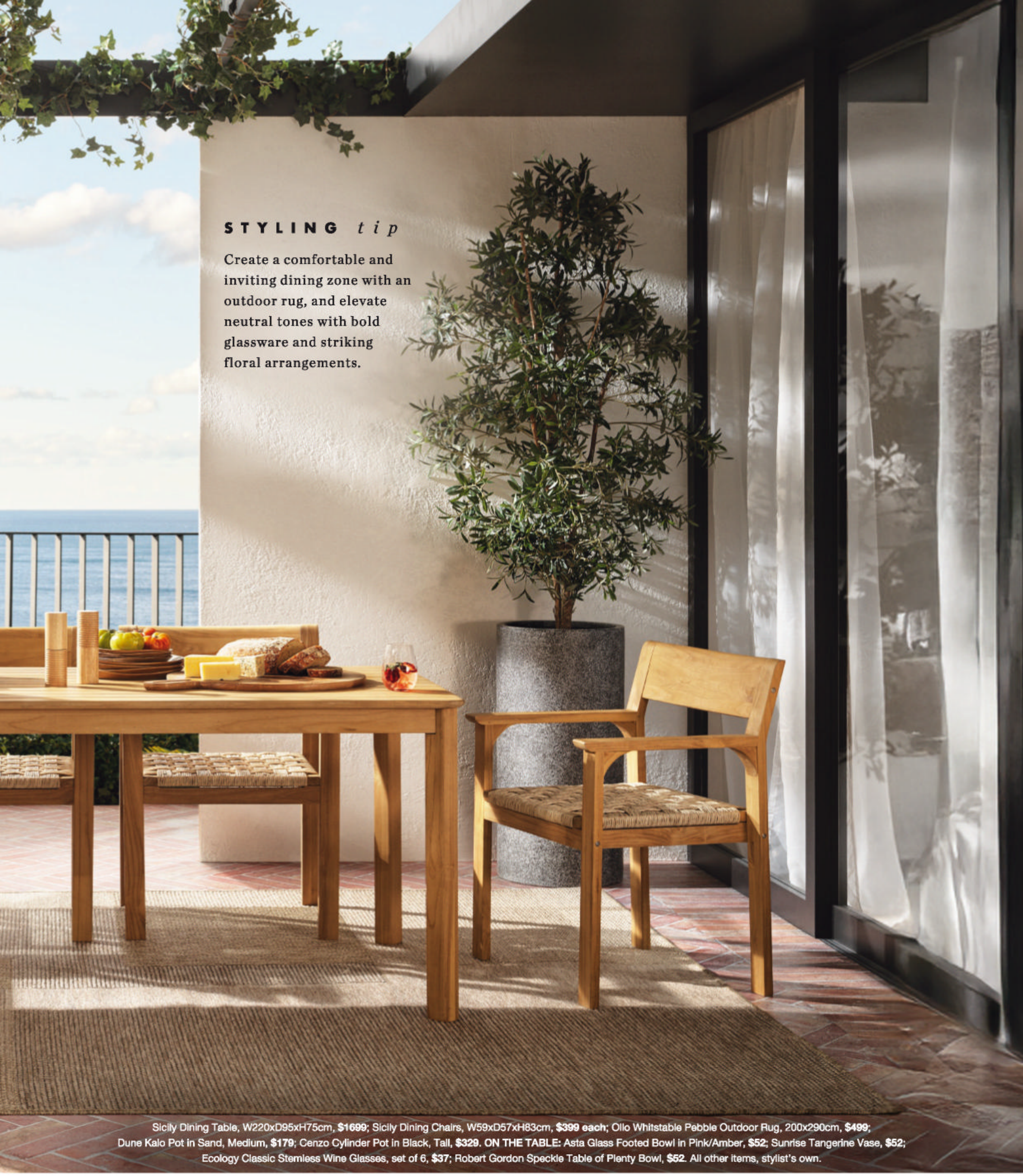
Find peace amongst the chaos, and grow moments of joy



SICILY CHARM

Generous proportions and classic style, for dinner parties that carry on late into the night.

DOMAYNE®



STYLING *tip*

Create a comfortable and inviting dining zone with an outdoor rug, and elevate neutral tones with bold glassware and striking floral arrangements.

Sicily Dining Table, W220xD95xH75cm, **$1699**; Sicily Dining Chairs, W59xD57xH83cm, **$399 each**; Ollo Whitstable Pebble Outdoor Rug, 200x290cm, **$499**; Dune Kalo Pot in Sand, Medium, **$179**; Cenzo Cylinder Pot in Black, Tall, **$329. ON THE TABLE:** Asta Glass Footed Bowl in Pink/Amber, **$52**; Sunrise Tangerine Vase, **$52**; Ecology Classic Stemless Wine Glasses, set of 6, **$37**; Robert Gordon Speckle Table of Plenty Bowl, **$52**. All other items, stylist's own.

VISIT DOMAYNE.COM.AU TO BROWSE OUR FULL RANGE OF FURNITURE, BEDDING AND HOMEWARES

Each Domayne® store is operated by an independent franchisee. Advertised prices valid at New South Wales stores only. Prices may vary between states due to additional freight costs. Accessories shown are not included. Some homewares shown are not exclusive to Domayne®. Promotion valid until 31/12/25, or while stocks last. Prices may vary due to customisation.

Yes, I would like to subscribe to *Better Homes and Gardens*

PAYMENT OPTIONS (Australian rates)

I WISH TO SUBSCRIBE FOR (tick one only)

Me Gift
☐ ☐ 12 months print only (13 issues) $89.99 SAVE 23% (BHGCD_13_8999_A)
*Auto-renewal

☐ ☐ 12 months print only (13 issues) $94.99 SAVE 25% (BHGA_13_9499)
*Upfront payment

☐ I already subscribe. Please extend my subscription with the offer selected above. For overseas rates, visit magshop.com.au/XMAS1

MY DETAILS

NAME

ADDRESS

POSTCODE

TELEPHONE ( )

EMAIL

GIFT RECIPIENT DETAILS

NAME

ADDRESS

POSTCODE

TELEPHONE ( )

EMAIL

PAYMENT DETAILS

Cheque/money order for $_____ is enclosed payable to Magshop

or charge my ☐ VISA ☐ MASTERCARD ☐ AMEX

☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐

CARDHOLDER'S NAME (please print)________________________

CARDHOLDER'S SIGNATURE________________________

EXPIRY DATE___/___

Please photocopy this order form for additional subscriptions

SUBSCRIBING IS EASY

Send original or copy of this coupon (no stamp required) to:

Magshop Reply Paid 5252
SYDNEY, NSW, 2001

M25XBHGC

Conditions apply, see magshop.com.au/competition. Commences October 30, 2025. Ends 11:59pm AEST/AEDST on January 28, 2026. AU & NZ residents 18+. This is a game of chance. The Promoter is Are Media Pty Limited (ABN 18 053 273 546) of 54 Park Street, Sydney, NSW 2000. Authorised under permit number: NSW: TP/03786, ACT: TP 25/02448, SA: T25/1831. *Your subscription will be subject to continued auto-renewal. Your credit card will continue to be charged as per the above rate and term unless you cancel and is subject to any price increases notified to you in accordance with the Magshop terms and conditions. For full Magshop terms and conditions including auto renewal payment plan terms, please visit magshop.com.au/competition. Our Privacy Policy can be found at aremedia.com.au/privacy and includes important information about our collection, use and disclosure of your personal information (including the provision of targeted advertising based on your online activities). It explains that if you do not provide us with information we have requested from you, we may not be able to provide you with the goods and services you require. It also explains how you can access or seek correction of your personal information, how you can complain about a breach of the Australian Privacy Principles and how we will deal with a complaint of that nature.

MORE GREAT GIFT IDEAS TO CHOOSE FROM

The Australian Women's Weekly
Maggie Beer
Woman's Day
BEC & LLEYTON AT BREAKING POINT!
home beautiful
80 FRESH IDEAS FOR A LIGHT & AIRY HOME

3 OTHER WAYS TO ORDER

1 SCAN THE QR CODE TO ORDER

2 ONLINE **magshop.com.au/XMAS1**

3 CALL **136 116 and quote M25XBHG**

Better Homes and Gardens.

DON'T MISS OUT!
It's the gift that keeps giving all year round.

CELEBRATE BIG!

ALL WE WANT FOR CHRISTMAS IS FOR YOU TO...

WIN $50,000

Better Homes and Gardens
GROW GARDEN BLOOMS

Subscribe to *Better Homes and Gardens* this Christmas or treat a loved one for your chance to **WIN**.

BONUS 48-PAGE MINCE RECIPE
Better Homes and Gardens
Best-ever zucchini & pumpkin slice!
DIY FATHER'S DAY GIFTS
212 clever ways to repurpose & save
VOTE TO WIN! PEOPLE'S CHOICE APPLIANCE AWARDS
Better Homes and Gardens
WIN $46k
Aussie BBQ favourites
TRY THIS! EASY FRENCH ONION BURGER SAUCE
Garden refresh
• Make scalloped pots
• DIY bird feeders
• Grow a balcony garden
225+ ways to enjoy the
Better Homes and Gardens
WIN $46k

SUBSCRIBER BENEFITS

13 ISSUES OF *BETTER HOMES AND GARDENS* FOR $89.99
VIA AUTOMATIC RENEWAL*

SAVE 23%
OFF THE RETAIL PRICE

FREE DELIVERY
OF THE MAGAZINE TO YOUR HOME EACH MONTH

RISK-FREE
CANCEL ANY TIME

164

48

92

CHRISTMAS 2025
Better Homes Gardens.
WIN $50,000 The ultimate Christmas gift!
TV SHOW 7 TURN US ON!
Homemade holidays
Make cookies, wreaths, ornaments and more PLUS Aussie Christmas style you'll love!
Affordable, faux BLOOMS make festive magic
Air fryer feast & a prep ahead menu, guide to gravy, and recipes from Matt Moran
Make this Santa sack with Geneva!
This Christmas is slow & SWEET
Find peace amongst the chaos, and grow moments of joy

Christmas 2025

Festive issue

ON THE COVER

4 Your chance to win $50K
17 Air fryer feast & a prep ahead menu
30 Aussie Christmas style you'll love!
36 Affordable, faux blooms make festive magic
48 Make this Santa sack with Geneva!
52 Recipes from Matt Moran
74, 92 Make cookies, wreaths, ornaments and more

BE A WINNER

4 Your chance to win $50K

FOOD

17 Easy Christmas menus Impress without the stress with prep-ahead recipes and festive air fryer fare.
52 A festive feast Matt Moran shares his time-saver Christmas food.
74 Cut-it-out! Make the most of cookie cutters with these sweets treats.
86 Cooking with Colin and Clarissa Fresh summer flavours, ideal for sharing.
102 Ready. Set. Graze. Share a Christmas brunch board.
104 Made to share Give joy with simple homemade food gifts.
128 Perfect match Wine, cheese and dips pairings made in heaven.
134 Better cooking
136 Dinner for one Chargrilled prawn and cauliflower salad.
138 Good gravy Top tips to master this hero side, plus tasty mix-ins.
140 Nuts about brittle Sweets to gift (or keep...)

GARDENING

42 Grow the love Plant gifts everyone will adore.
112 Fast food that's good for you Sow your summer salads now.
164 Star attraction Learn how to look after your stunning poinsettias so they last beyond New Year.
170 In your garden Summer sensations bring Christmas cheer.
172 Moon guide with Milton Black
174 Better gardening

Photography John Paul Urizar; styling Nonci Nyoni and Megan Osborne

COMMUNITY

108 Tasting a better life How Two Good Co supports disadvantaged women.

CRAFT

48 Sleigh my name Create a new tradition with Geneva's simple Santa sacks.
92 Posh palette Clever craft to give ornaments a five-star upgrade.
120 Christmas checklist Use retro patterns with a modern take.
122 Toppers & trimmings Follow our crafty tricks to create homespun treasures.
178 Time to raid the pantry Most of what you need for these craft projects is already in your kitchen!

INTERIORS

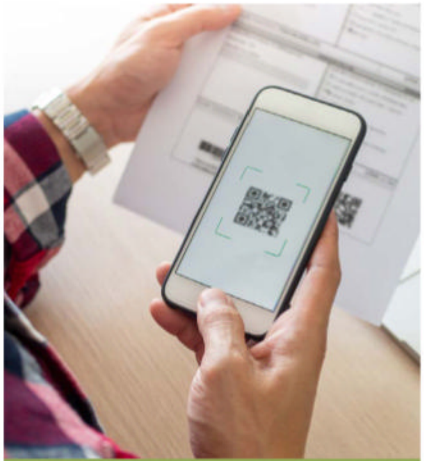
30 Aussie Christmas Looking for a new theme? Australiana adds a twist to your festivities.
36 Floral Christmas Faux seasonal blooms will take your decor to the next level.
57 Farm to tablescapes Dress your table with nature's help.
64 Better decorating

GIFTING

144 Gifted 128 presents to inspire you!
142 Thoughtful treats It's not Christmas without moreish treats from Haigh's.
160 Gifting goals Eight ways to keep the costs down.

REGULAR FEATURES

10 Editor's letter
11 Editor's picks
13 Write to us! Share your stories.
16 Contributors
162 Better health Channel your holiday calm.
176 Better pets Dress-ups for furry friends.
182 Better books
184 Better finance
188 Better stockists
188 Privacy notice
194 Better experiences



HOW TO USE A QR CODE

Scan these handy codes across our pages for even more content!

1. Open your phone's camera app.
2. Point your camera towards the QR code, using the rear-facing camera (not the selfie camera).
3. Click on the banner that pops up on your phone screen.
4. Scroll through all the latest from BHG on your phone!

VISIT US ONLINE FOR ALL THE LATEST UPDATES, PROJECTS AND GREAT IDEAS

bhg.com.au facebook.com/bhgaus instagram.com/bhgaus pinterest.com/bhgaus

Season's Greetings

The BHG TV team wishes you a happy festive season.

It's leading up to the most wonderful time of the year, where we get to celebrate and spend time with friends and loved ones. For the past 12 months we've been inspiring you to cook up a storm, get creative, get stuck into DIY projects and improve your house and garden. From us all at BHG TV, we hope we've inspired you to create the home and lifestyle you dream of. Thank you so much for inviting us into your home every week and for being part of our community. We can't wait to keep bringing you inspiration and expert tips in 2026.

BHG TV *summer series*

Better Homes and Gardens airs at 7pm Fridays on Seven, 7TWO and 7plus. The Summer Series starts on December 5.

ABOVE, FROM LEFT The *Better Homes and Gardens* TV team – Dr Harry Cooper, Clarissa Feildel, Colin Fassnidge, Johanna Griggs, Adam Dovile, Melissa King, Charlie Albone, Juliet Love, Graham Ross.

Photography Scot Elher

NATIO

Give a thoughtful gift designed to be cherished long after the festive season from the Natio Christmas collection.

natio.com.au

ROYAL DAVUI
ISLAND-FIJI

win a luxury escape to Fiji for two

scan to enter

T&C's apply.

Slow & *sweet*

As much as we might look forward to it, Christmas can be an incredibly hectic time of year. That's why we wanted to make this Christmas issue all about slowing down.

All the shopping, planning, eating and socialising (often while crawling to the finish line at work) can leave us completely out of steam by the time we finally get to stop. Add to that the cost-of-living pressures and the constant digital noise we all navigate daily, and this "holiday" can leave us quite turned around.

And don't forget that, for some, Christmas isn't the happiest time of year. It may be fraught with anxiety about keeping everyone else happy, or potentially painful for many other reasons.

While I'm lucky enough to find joy in the season – whipping up feasts, cheese platters and sweet treats, and belting out Mariah Carey, Otis Redding and Michael Bublé (still waiting for that Taylor Swift Christmas album!) – I too need the reminder to slow down.

We wanted this issue to feel like a sanctuary. A collection of ideas that celebrates the festive season in all its colour and flavour, but also gently encourages you to stop, breathe, and be present. To feel whatever there is to feel.

Let these pages guide you back to a slower, more thoughtful kind of joy – whether that's decorating the living room as a family, baking cookies for friends and neighbours, reimagining humble pantry staples into show-stopping ornaments, or growing your own summer salad ingredients. These are just a few of the rewarding ideas you'll find as you turn the pages.

However you spend this season, I hope this BHG issue and community bring you small, meaningful moments that fill your cup and remind you what truly matters most.

Wishing you a very Merry Christmas.

Megan

Megan Osborne
Editor

WE'RE LOVING

How cute is the Christmas cookie cutters feature on page 74? You can use the stamps for decorations, too. I think I'll try my hand at the polymer clay idea.

CAROL TANG
Senior Designer

I'm nuts for the *Nuts about Brittle* story (page 140). What a great gifting idea. But I'll probably eat it all myself before it makes it to the gifting stage!

MONIQUE LARRACY
Design Director

I'm obsessed with Jenny's plant gift guide (page 42). As a hopeless brown thumb, it's made this year's gift giving a whole lot easier and cheaper.

JADA SUSAS
Editorial and Production Assistant

EDITOR'S GUIDE TO gifting

I love giving presents and I get a real thrill from finding that perfect gift for someone. If you're feeling stuck, try my gifting suggestions for anyone, from friends and family to work's Secret Santa. No socks in sight.

Kids

When I spy a little craft kit, my inner child squeals. My heart always leads me to something fun and artsy when I'm buying for friends' kids. These fruit and veg crochet kits are just the cutest beginner projects. **The Knitty Critters Crochet Kits from Spotlight, $16 each**

Work pals

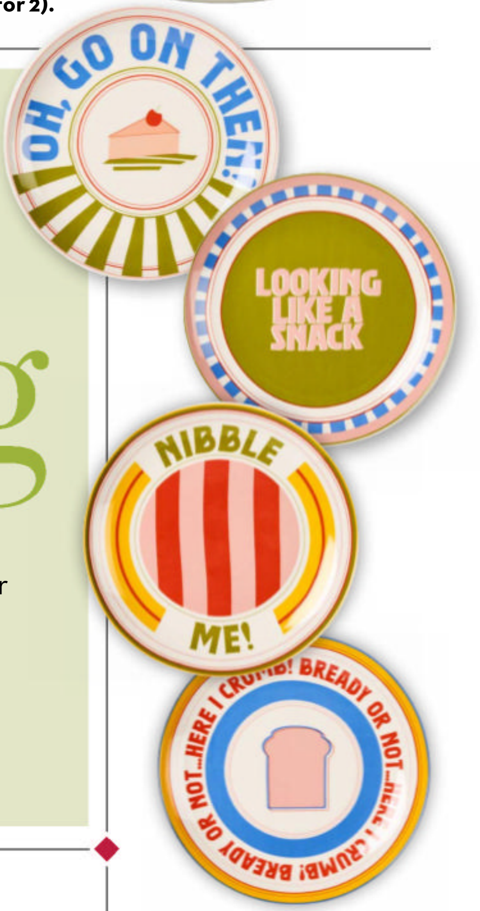
It's easy to find a mug with just the right quirky message for a colleague! That shared joke will bring a smile to your workmate's face every time they grab a cuppa. **Daily Mug from Typo, $9.95 (on sale 3 for 2).**

ASK ME ABOUT MY CAT

HAIGH'S CHOCOLATES

Yourself

A lot of people use Christmas to get themselves things they've been needing for a while. But I prefer to give myself a treat, so it feels more special and indulgent. My pick? Haigh's of course! **Haigh's Christmas Assorted Chocolates Box**



Friends

If your mates are anything like mine, then most of what you do when you're together is eat. No-one takes a joke like your friends, so give them these cheeky plates next time you're catching up for a bite. **Sunnie four-piece side plate set from Linen House, $69.95.**

Parents

When I give a cheese hamper at this time of year, I make sure it arrives early. I like to think that it's partly kicking off the celebrations early, and partly taking some small extra stress out of festive shopping, or spoiling someone who may not be inclined to spoil themselves. **Cheese hamper from your local provedore or online.**

Partners

I'm telling you now, the best gift for your partner isn't socks. I'd always suggest an activity as a gift. A ticket to a concert, a skills class or an adventure together. How about a pottery kit you could do together at home? **DIY Pottery Kit from The Clay Co, $110.**

SCAN ME
Scan this QR code to shop these items.

Prices are approximate and a guide only. Due to the printing process, colour reproduction is a guide only.

Better Homes and Gardens.

Editor
Megan Osborne

Creative director
Scott Cassidy

Managing editor
Sophie Al-Bassam

Chief sub-editor Jo McKinnon
Digital editor Tahni Mesann **Design director** Monique Larracy
Senior designer Carol Tang **Garden editor** Jenny Dillon
Senior food editor Sarah Murphy **DIY editor** Tiff Bancroft
Stylist Nonci Nyoni **Creative projects editor** Geneva Vanderzeil
Senior content producers Jade Coull, Rachel Iorfino, Livia Gamble
Editorial & production assistant Jada Susas
Enquiries (02) 9282 8000

REGULAR CONTRIBUTORS
In your garden Tony Fawcett **Moon guide** Milton Black
Better pets Caroline Zambrano **Better finance** Andrea Black
Better books & experiences Rachel Iorfino

ADVERTISING
Head of commercial, home & lifestyle Rhyl Heavener
Advertising enquiries (02) 9282 8000, advertising@aremedia.com.au
Head of sales NSW Jimmy Kerr **Head of sales VIC** Nisar Malik
Head of sales QLD & SA Judy Taylor **Director of sales** Anna Quinn

TELEVISION
Host Johanna Griggs **Presenters: Pets** Dr Harry Cooper
Gardening Graham Ross, Melissa King **DIY** Adam Dovile **Food** Colin Fassnidge,
Clarissa Feildel **Landscaping** Charlie Albone **Decorating** Juliet Love
Executive producer Russell Palmer **Series producer** Rani Eaton
Production manager Felicity Allen **Researchers: Gardening & Landscaping** Vivien Kappos,
Grahame Rowe **Decorating** Karenza Jewell, Chris Cort **DIY** John Rae, Greg Sparke
Food Kim Meredith **Junior decorating researcher/Stylist** Erin Brikich
Construction manager Pete Morrison **Producers** Cassandra Felix, Cameron Hartley,
Dan Gustafson, Stephanie Walsh **Associate producers** Sharon Field, Heidi Ahrens
Post production Jessica Stone, Edvin Mandic, Amarnath Jones, Markus Siegl,
Steven Levett, Tatiana Karpish **Production assistants** Callum Domeney,
Sarah Johnson **Associate producer – social media** Sophia Gerardi
Commercial partnerships manager Stewart Light **Production co-ordinator**
Portia Cheung **Senior production co-ordinator** Stephanie Lee

ARE MEDIA PTY LIMITED
(02) 9282 8000, 54 Park Street, Sydney, 2000
Chief executive officer Jane Huxley
Director of content Sally Eagle
General manager, homes and lifestyle Jocelin Abbey

PEOPLE INC. INTERNATIONAL
Vice president, business and strategy Joy Evans
Executive director, licensing operations Paul Ordoñez

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas. Make it easy with our festive recipes starting on page 17.

are media

Reproduction: Printed in Australia by IVE Group, Building D, 350 Parramatta Rd, Homebush, NSW 2140. Distributed by Are Direct. Published 13 times a year by Are Media Pty Ltd (ABN 053 273 546). For competition entries, use the address on entry forms. Title and trademark BETTER HOMES AND GARDENS®reg US Patents Office, Canada and Australia, by People Inc. International. Use of trademark is strictly prohibited. Recommended price with cookie cutters $9.70 inc GST, without cookie cutters $8.99 inc GST ($9.99 NZ inc GST).
All content © 2025 Are Media Pty Ltd, all rights reserved. Reproduction without permission is prohibited.
All prices and information are correct as at the time of printing. Prices quoted are recommended retail prices and may vary. All material sent to *Better Homes and Gardens* (whether solicited or not) will not be returned. Unless otherwise agreed beforehand, all rights including copyright in such material is assigned to Are Media Pty Ltd upon receipt and Are Media Pty Ltd may use or sell the material in all media worldwide in perpetuity without further consent or payment. *Better Homes and Gardens* does not accept or assume responsibility for such material. *Better Homes and Gardens* may have generated content partially using generative AI, which our editors review, edit and revise to their requirements. We take ultimate responsibility for the content of this publication.

Television enquiries (02) 9877 7652 **Email** tvenquiries@seven.com.au
Magazine enquiries (02) 9282 8000 **Email** bhgmagenquiries@aremedia.com.au
Subscription customer service 136 116 **Email** magshop@magshop.com.au
Website magshop.com.au/ContactUs

Write to us

From tips, tricks and projects to your greatest stories, we'd love to hear from you.

Letter of the month

Friday nights run like clockwork: swimming lessons, showers, PJs and then collapsing on the couch for BHG on the TV. The boys (ages 10 and 6) reckon the cooking segments are the real main event.

When I got the BHG showbag from the Melbourne Royal Show they were hooked on the magazine and decided the recipes and DIY pages counted as school reading. (Parenting hack unlocked!)

It's inspired a love of cooking, encouraged reading beyond their usual graphic novels and given us plenty of delicious meals to enjoy. But let's be honest... we'll leave the DIY to dad.

– ***Vicky***

CONGRATULATIONS!

We loved hearing about how you've inspired the next generation! We hope you and your boys can explore your love for cooking with your new Tefal Dual Easy Fry.

Birthday BBQ

I came across your magazine quite by happenstance at Bunnings today. It's my 56th birthday next week and, as usual, I'm hosting the younger generations.

I find myself frustrated at coming up with new ideas about what to cook. Both my children are chefs and seem to like to come and just eat their mum's cooking!

Luckily for me I noticed the cover of the November magazine and it said, 'Aussie BBQ Favourites'. I bought it without hesitation! Thank you for giving me some fresh ideas!

– ***Sarah***

Next-level glamping

Camping on the banks of the Murrumbidgee River, NSW, with family, friends and our dog, Gus, is our ritual for the October long weekend. We're surrounded by towering eucalypts, magnificent sunsets and the flickering warmth of the campfire.

Sarah's Big Aussie Burger (Nov 2025) with the choice of tomato and chilli jam, burger sauce and french onion sauce was a highlight. The burgers were great, but Sarah's BBQ Croissant S'mores were a runaway winner with the warm croissants filled with melted mouthwatering sweetness. What a treat!

Thank you to Sarah for taking our camping barbecue to the next level of glamping culinary delights.

– ***Diane***

Trash to treasure

Talk about serendipity! I turned the page in your latest issue of BHG and there was the answer as to what to do with the old ladder I was going to put out with the hard rubbish collection in the next few days – a vertical garden.

I'm now searching for the most attractive plants to liven up a small area in my courtyard. Thanks for the inspiration.

– ***Rosemary***

LAST MONTH

We'll be announcing who won the Ninja SLUSHi in our January issue.

UP FOR GRABS FOR READERS

Basil Bangs
Jardin patio umbrella
VALUED AT $849

Our favourite letter will receive this gorgeous umbrella perfect for keeping the Aussie sun at bay, whether by the pool, in the backyard or on the patio.

ENTRY PERIOD
Nov 21 – Dec 18, 2025

HOW TO CONTRIBUTE

Scan the code to fill out our online reader letter form, or email us at **bhgmagenquiries@aremedia.com.au** Make sure to include your full name, mailing address, email address, and daytime phone number.

By writing to us at **bhgmagenquiries.com.au** you provide permission for your words to be reprinted, in part or in full, across our platforms.

Wishing you a Merry Christmas from the team at BHG!

Opposite page, front row, from left: Tahni Mesann, Monique Larracy, Sophie Al-Bassam, Megan Osborne, Jada Susas. **Back row, from left:** Rachel Iorfino, Jo McKinnon, Jenny Dillon, Livia Gamble, Nonci Nyoni, Sarah Murphy, Scott Cassidy, Jade Coull, Carol Tang.

Photography PHILLIP CASTLETON

Our highlights

Thank you so much for being part of the BHG community. We've loved sharing fresh ideas, delicious recipes, flourishing gardens and more. Here are some of the team's highlights from 2025.

A FRESH TAKE

This year it's been so rewarding to see original ideas brought to life by the whole team, as well as establishing partnerships with some amazing talent, such as Geneva Vanderzeil and Matt Moran. Each issue we strive to find ways to bring more value and creativity to life, for you, our readers, while working to nurture this amazing BHG community. Every project, conversation, mood board, production shoot and recipe taste test are things I'm forever grateful for.
Megan Osborne, Editor

AHEAD OF THE TRENDS

Going to the Melbourne International Flower and Garden show (for the June issue) was an opportunity to see how global gardening trends can take on a unique Aussie flavour.
Jenny Dillon,
Garden Editor

FLOWER POWER

A story that's stayed with me is our feature on hydrangeas from the Jan 2025 issue. There were so many varieties!
Jo McKinnon,
Chief Sub-editor

SWEET MEMORIES

The Iced VoVo Pie from the June issue was one of the most rewarding recipes I've ever created. From dreaming up the concept to the countless days perfecting it, it felt really special to pour so much care into one project.
Sarah Murphy,
Senior Food Editor

PAGE TURNERS

Nothing beats being able to review the latest books. I loved exploring the tiny world of the Kapiti Coast in Jenny Pattrick's *Sea Change* (in our October 'Eco' issue), and every book from the 'Kitchen' issue in May was so fun to dive into.
Rachel Iorfino,
Senior Content Producer

IT STARTS WITH A SEED

The save your seeds and scraps story for the April issue was a fave of mine. The subject matter is very close to home as my son is always planting from vegie scraps, and he has a great crop of tomatoes as a result.
Monique Larracy,
Design Director

Contributors

Meet the creative minds shaping this issue with insights and inspo for everyone!

MEL BURGE

Recipe developer and food prep

We love it when Mel helps us at BHG! In this issue, she cooked the festive air-fryer recipes (see page 18) and prep-ahead menu (see page 24) for our shoots, and couldn't stop raving about the mango jelly in the trifle. It's one dish she's planning to have on her own Christmas table this year.

ROB CASLICK

CEO, Two Good Co

Rob is the founder of Two Good Co, a social enterprise that supports and employs women with lived experience of homelessness and domestic violence. We speak to him about his important work and share a recipe from Two Good's latest book, *Sweet Memories* (see page 108).

Home gifting

PHILLIP CASTLETON

Photographer

Phil has captured incredible images across Australia's top publications. His work spans editorial, advertising, celebrities and 'real' people who help make our society a better place. "Through photography, I try to translate their stories into images that connect and remind us of our shared humanity," he explains. Phil photographed our team on page 15, and showed his still-life skills with our gift guides from page 144.

host with the most

> “ THESE RECIPES ARE ABOUT CELEBRATION. THEY REMIND US THAT FOOD CAN DO MORE THAN FEED THE BODY, IT CAN LIFT THE SPIRIT AND DEMONSTRATE LOVE AND JOY FOR SOMEONE YOU CARE ABOUT. ”
>
> ROB CASLICK

EASY
Christmas menus

These delicious recipes are designed to impress your loved ones with beautiful food while taking the pressure off so you can relax and enjoy the celebrations.

Photography TIM ROBERTS *Styling* LUCY BUSUTTIL *Recipes* TAMIKA O'NEILL & JANELLE BLOOM

Festive FRYER

Turn your air fryer into a Christmas hero with a tasty feast ready for a crowd.

AIR FRYER CHARCUTERIE CHIPS
Recipe on page 22

AIR FRYER PORK WITH PEACH AND PECAN STUFFING

Recipe on page 22

AIR FRYER VEGIE SALAD WITH TOASTED HAZELNUTS
Recipe on page 23

AIR-FRIED CRISPY BEANS AND ALMONDS WITH ROAST GARLIC DRESSING
Recipe on page 22

AIR FRYER CHERRY AND ALMOND TARTS
Recipe on page 23

AIR FRYER CHARCUTERIE CHIPS

Preparation time 5 mins
Cooking time 10 mins
Serves 4

120g plain potato chips
80g prosciutto
125g brie, cut into slices
½ x 100g tub fig paste, broken into pieces
40g baby rocket
20g parmesan, finely grated

STEP 1 Line the air-fryer basket with foil to cover the entire base and walls. Fill with chips, then top with prosciutto, brie and fig paste. Air-fry for 5–8 minutes or until brie has melted.
STEP 2 Carefully remove foil from air fryer, transfer to a serving plate and top with rocket and parmesan.

COOK'S TIP

The amount of chips used will depend on the size of your air fryer. In testing, we used a 4-litre air fryer.

AIR FRYER PORK WITH PEACH AND PECAN STUFFING

Preparation time 20 mins
Cooking time 1 hour 10 mins
Serves 8

1.6kg boneless loin of pork, rind on, scored (see tip)
2 teaspoons sea-salt flakes

PEACH AND PECAN STUFFING

2 tablespoons olive oil
1 red onion, finely chopped
1 clove garlic, crushed
2 tablespoons chopped sage leaves, plus fried leaves to serve
1 cup fresh breadcrumbs
1 ripe yellow peach, seeded, chopped, plus extra wedges to serve
½ cup roasted pecans, coarsely chopped
1 free-range egg, lightly whisked

STEP 1 For the stuffing, in a frying pan, heat oil on medium heat. Sauté onion for 4–5 minutes, until golden. Add garlic and sage. Cook for 1 minute. Remove from heat and transfer to a large bowl. Cool slightly, then stir in remaining ingredients.
STEP 2 Place pork, rind side down, on a clean work surface. Remove any string. Use a large sharp knife to make a cut along the thickest part of the pork to make a cavity for the stuffing (don't cut all the way through). Press stuffing along the centre of the pork (reserve any extra stuffing to cook next to the pork). Use kitchen string to tie pork at 5cm intervals to secure. Rub skin with salt.
STEP 3 Preheat air fryer to 200°C for 3 minutes. Taking care, place pork, rind side up, in the air-fryer basket. Cook, uncovered, for 40 minutes or until rind is blistered and browned. Reset air fryer temperature to 160°C, roast for a further 30 minutes or until pork is tender (internal temperature 70–75°C is reached on a meat thermometer).
STEP 4 Remove pork from air fryer, cover loosely with foil, and let stand for 10 minutes before carving. Serve with extra peaches and fried sage leaves.

COOK'S TIPS

- For crisp crackling, place unstuffed pork with the rind uncovered in the fridge overnight to dry out the skin.
- Air fryer sizes vary so ensure you choose a piece of pork that fits your air fryer. Allow space around the pork for the crackling to expand.

AIR-FRIED CRISPY BEANS AND ALMONDS WITH ROAST GARLIC DRESSING

Preparation time 5 mins
Cooking time 15 mins
Serves 4

1 small garlic bulb
500g green beans, trimmed
⅓ cup flaked almonds
200g cherry tomatoes, halved

ROAST GARLIC DRESSING

3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
2 tablespoons white wine vinegar
1 teaspoon honey
1 teaspoon dijon mustard
1 tablespoon water
Sea-salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper, to season

STEP 1 Preheat air fryer to 180°C for 5 minutes. Cut the tip off the garlic bulb, leaving whole. Add beans and garlic to the air fryer and fry for 10–12 minutes, shaking halfway, until cooked. Transfer beans to a large bowl with cherry tomatoes (leaving garlic in air fryer).
STEP 2 Add almonds with the garlic and air-fry for 3 minutes or until golden. Set aside.
STEP 3 To make the dressing, squeeze cooked garlic cloves into a small food processor and add remaining ingredients. Process until smooth and creamy. Season.
STEP 4 Transfer bean mixture to a plate, top with almonds and drizzle with dressing to coat (see tip).

COOK'S TIP

You'll make a bit more dressing than you need for this recipe. Keep remaining dressing in an airtight container in the fridge for up to 5 days.

AIR FRYER VEGIE SALAD WITH TOASTED HAZELNUTS

Preparation time 5 mins
Cooking time 15 mins
Serves 4

400g baby potatoes, halved
350g kent pumpkin, cut into 4cm chunks
Olive oil spray
250g small carrots, cut on the diagonal in 4cm chunks
1 red onion, cut into wedges
¼ cup skinless hazelnuts
100g mixed salad leaves
Sea-salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper, to season

DRESSING

3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
2 tablespoons lemon juice
½ teaspoon dijon mustard
1 teaspoon dukkah

STEP 1 Preheat air fryer to 180°C for 5 minutes. Add potatoes and pumpkin, spray with oil and cook for 25 minutes, turning halfway until cooked and golden. Transfer to a large bowl.
STEP 2 Add carrots and red onion and air-fry for 10 minutes, adding hazelnuts in the last 5 minutes. Transfer everything to the bowl.
STEP 3 To make the dressing, add all ingredients to a small jug and shake until emulsified. Season.
STEP 4 Add mixed salad leaves to the vegetables and toss to combine. Drizzle with dressing and serve.

AIR FRYER CHERRY AND ALMOND TARTS

Preparation time 10 mins plus 35 mins chilling and 10 mins freezing
Cooking time 35 mins
Makes 4

50g unsalted butter, softened
⅔ cup almond meal, plus 2 teaspoons extra
¼ cup brown sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla bean paste
350g frozen pitted cherries
1½ teaspoons cornflour
1 egg yolk, lightly beaten
2 teaspoons water
2 tablespoons flaked almonds
Ice cream, to serve

SWEET SHORTCRUST PASTRY

1 cup plain flour
2 tablespoons icing sugar, plus extra to dust
70g chilled unsalted butter, chopped
1 free-range egg yolk
1 tablespoon iced water

STEP 1 To make the pastry, add flour, icing sugar and butter to a food processor and pulse until it forms a fine crumb. Add egg and water and continue to pulse until dough just comes together. Wrap in plastic wrap and refrigerate for 30–35 minutes.
STEP 2 Combine butter, almond meal, brown sugar and vanilla, stirring to make a thick paste. Toss cherries in cornflour.
STEP 3 Divide dough into four equal portions. Roll each portion between two sheets of baking paper to a 15–16cm round. Sprinkle each pastry round with extra almond meal, then top with the almond paste, and spread, leaving about a 2–3cm border. Arrange cherries on almond paste, then bring pastry up slightly over cherries, pleating as you go. Place tarts on a tray lined with baking paper and freeze for 10 minutes to firm.
STEP 4 Preheat air fryer to 200°C for 5 minutes.
STEP 5 Cut four squares of baking paper slightly larger than each tart (see tip). Whisk egg yolk and water in a small bowl. Brush pastry sides with egg wash and press on almonds (it's important to press the almonds on so they stick).
STEP 6 Carefully transfer each tart on its piece of baking paper to the air fryer (working in batches if you need, keep uncooked tarts in the fridge). Air-fry for 5 minutes. Reduce heat to 180°C. Air-fry for a further 10 minutes until golden. Cool in air fryer for 5 minutes then, using the edges of the baking paper, carefully lift onto a tray to cool completely. (Repeat with remaining tarts if cooking in batches.)
STEP 7 Serve tarts with ice cream and dusted with icing sugar.

COOK'S TIPS

- Preheating the air fryer is important to assist with the base cooking.
- The baking paper needs to be wide enough to be able to lift in and out of the air fryer, but don't make the piece too big or it may catch.

PREP*ahead*

Ease the stress on the big day with recipes you can organise early!

EVERYTHING BAGEL CUPS

Get prepped:
Make tart cases up to 2 days ahead, store in a snap-lock container. Make cream cheese filling up to 1 day ahead and store in a sealed container in the fridge.
Recipe on page 28

TURKEY WITH PISTACHIO AND CRAISIN STUFFING

Get prepped:
Make the stuffing and store in an airtight container in the fridge (do not stuff the turkey ahead of time).
Recipe on page 28

SPICED CAULIFLOWER WITH TAHINI SAUCE

Get prepped:

Roast cauliflower in the oven, then cover and refrigerate. Bring to room temperature before serving.

Make tahini sauce 1 day before. Store, covered, in the fridge. Add a little water to loosen if needed.

Remove pomegranate arils from fruit and store in a container in the fridge.

Recipe on page 29

SPROUTS AND SEEDS SLAW

Get prepped:

Toast seed mix and pecans 2 days ahead and place in a sealed container in the fridge.

Make dressing 1 day ahead, store in a screwtop jar in the fridge.

Combine shredded red and green cabbage, green onions and herbs, and store in a snap-lock bag in the fridge.

Shred the carrots, secure in a snap-lock bag and store in the fridge.

Recipe on page 28

MANGO, COCONUT AND LIME TRIFLE

Get prepped:
Make the jelly and the lime syrup 1 day ahead. Cover and refrigerate.
Toast coconut up to 3 days ahead and store in an airtight container.
Trifle can be made to end of step 4 up to 12 hours ahead. Cover and refrigerate in the coldest part of the fridge.
Recipe on page 29

EVERYTHING BAGEL CUPS

Preparation time 15 mins
Cooking time 15 mins
Makes 12

Olive oil spray
5 sheets filo pastry
250g cream cheese, softened
2 tablespoons milk
Finely grated zest 1 lemon, plus wedges to serve
1½ tablespoons chopped dill, plus sprigs to serve
Sea-salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper, to season
100g smoked salmon slices, cut into strips
1 cucumber, peeled into ribbons
½ small red onion, thinly sliced
2 teaspoons Everything Bagel Seasoning
2 teaspoons capers (optional)

STEP 1 Preheat oven to 180°C/160°C fan-forced. Lightly grease a 12-hole, ⅓-cup capacity muffin tray with oil.
STEP 2 Spray each filo pastry sheet with oil, stacking as you go. Cut in 12 pieces. Press one stack into each muffin hole and lightly prick the base with a fork.
STEP 3 Bake for 15 minutes until crisp and golden. Cool in pans completely. Carefully remove from pans (edges of shells are delicate). Store in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 2 days.
STEP 4 In a small bowl, beat cream cheese with an electric mixer until fluffy. Add milk and beat on low speed to combine. Increase speed to high and beat for 2–3 minutes, until fluffy. Stir in lemon zest and dill, then season. Cover, refrigerate until needed.
STEP 5 When ready to serve, dollop whipped cream cheese mixture into base of tart shells (alternatively, transfer to a small snap-lock bag and snip a 2cm edge from the corner and pipe in – this helps to avoid breaking any of the delicate filo pastry edges).
STEP 6 Top with salmon, cucumber and red onion. Sprinkle with Everything Bagel Seasoning and capers, if using. Serve with dill sprigs and lemon wedges.

TURKEY WITH PISTACHIO AND CRAISIN STUFFING

Preparation time 30 mins
Cooking time 3 hours
Serves 8

4.5kg whole turkey
2 tablespoons olive oil
2 cups water

PISTACHIO & CRAISIN STUFFING
20g butter
2 rashers rindless bacon, chopped
1 brown onion, chopped
1 stalk celery, trimmed, chopped
2 garlic cloves, crushed
½ cup port
2 tablespoons chopped rosemary leaves, plus extra sprigs to serve
Sea-salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper, to season
4 cups fresh breadcrumbs
½ cup craisins
¼ cup pistachios, finely chopped
2 tablespoons chopped parsley
1 free-range egg, lightly whisked

GRAVY
¼ cup plain flour
1 cup red wine
2½ cups hot chicken stock

STEP 1 Preheat oven to 180°C/160°C fan-forced. Pat turkey dry with paper towel and tuck wings under body.
STEP 2 For the stuffing, in a frying pan melt butter on medium heat. Sauté bacon, onion, celery and garlic for 4–5 minutes, until tender. Add port and rosemary. Cook for 1–2 minutes. Transfer to a large bowl and cool slightly. Season. Stir in breadcrumbs, craisins, pistachios and parsley.
STEP 3 On the day of cooking, press two-thirds of the stuffing into the turkey cavity. Close the cavity with a skewer, then using kitchen string, tie legs together. Place turkey on a wire rack over a large flameproof roasting pan. Tuck wings underneath body.
STEP 4 Brush with oil and season. Pour water into base of pan. Cover turkey with foil. Bake for 2 hours, remove foil. Bake for 30–40 minutes until cooked through. Remove from oven and leave to rest, loosely covered, for 15 minutes.
STEP 5 Meanwhile, combine remaining stuffing with whisked egg. Roll mixture into eight balls and arrange on a baking tray lined with baking paper. Roast in the oven for 15 minutes.
STEP 6 To make the gravy, pour off all but a few tablespoons of pan drippings from the roasting pan. Sprinkle flour into the roasting pan, cook on low heat, gradually whisking in the red wine to form a smooth, lump-free mixture. Increase heat to medium, simmer 3–4 minutes, stirring gently to lift all the sticky bits from the pan. Gradually add the hot stock and simmer to thicken. Season with pepper. Serve turkey with gravy and extra stuffing balls.

SPROUTS AND SEEDS SLAW

Preparation time 45 mins
Cooking time 8 mins
Serves 8

¼ cup seed mix
½ cup pecans, coarsely chopped
300g green or purple brussels sprouts (see tip)
¼ green cabbage, finely shredded
¼ red cabbage, finely shredded
3 carrots, coarsely shredded
6 green onions, thinly sliced
⅓ cup parsley or coriander leaves, coarsely chopped

Food preparation Mel Burge

DRESSING

2 teaspoons finely grated orange zest
⅓ cup orange juice
⅓ cup extra virgin olive oil
Sea-salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper, to season
½ cup whole-egg mayonnaise

STEP 1 Preheat oven 180°C/160°C fan-forced. Scatter seed mix and pecans on a baking tray. Roast for 5–8 minutes, until lightly toasted. Set aside to cool.
STEP 2 For the dressing, combine the orange zest, juice and olive oil in a bowl. Season. Whisk to combine. Remove 3 tablespoons to another bowl and set aside. Add mayonnaise to remaining orange mixture, whisking until smooth.
STEP 3 Using a mandoline, finely shred the brussels sprouts into a large bowl. Spoon over the reserved orange mixture, tossing gently to coat. Cover and refrigerate 1 hour, if time permits.
STEP 4 To serve, combine cabbage, carrot, green onion and parsley or coriander in a large bowl. Add shredded sprouts and seed and pecan mix. Toss gently. Add dressing to the slaw and toss gently. Serve.

COOK'S TIP

Always protect your fingers by using the guard on a mandoline.

SPICED CAULIFLOWER WITH TAHINI SAUCE

Preparation time 20 mins
Cooking time 30 mins
Serves 6–8

1 (1-1.2kg) cauliflower, trimmed
⅓ cup extra virgin olive oil, plus extra to serve
3 tablespoons dukkah
4 large garlic cloves, unpeeled
⅔ cup parsley leaves
4 tablespoons hulled tahini
2 tablespoons lemon juice
1½ tablespoons maple syrup
1 cup Greek-style yoghurt
Sea-salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper
30g baby spinach leaves
1 pomegranate, quartered, arils removed

STEP 1 Preheat oven 220°C/200°C fan-forced. Cut the cauliflower into florets, leaving 2–3cm of stem intact. Cut each floret in half. Place into a large lightly greased roasting pan, spreading in a single layer. Pour over 3 tablespoons oil and sprinkle with dukkah.
STEP 2 Place garlic cloves in a square of foil. Drizzle with 1 tablespoon olive oil. Gather edges of foil together to secure. Place in a corner of the roasting pan. Roast for 30 minutes, turning cauliflower every 10 minutes, until golden and tender. Set aside to cool.
STEP 3 Unwrap the garlic and squeeze the flesh onto a small plate. Mash with a fork. Place ⅓ cup parsley leaves into food processor. Pulse until coarsely chopped. Add the garlic, tahini, lemon juice and maple syrup. Process until well combined (mixture is very thick). Add the yoghurt, season, then pulse until just combined.
STEP 4 Spoon tahini yoghurt over the base of a serving platter. Scatter over the spinach and remaining parsley leaves. Top with cauliflower, sprinkle with pomegranate arils and a drizzle olive oil. Serve.

MANGO, COCONUT AND LIME TRIFLE

Preparation time 60 mins plus 4 hours setting and overnight chilling
Cooking time 7 mins
Serves 8

½ cup lime juice (3–4 limes), plus 1 lime cut into thin wedges
½ cup caster sugar
⅓ cup water or white rum
600ml thickened cream
300g sour cream
¾ cup shaved coconut, toasted, plus extra to serve
3 ripe mangoes, peeled, sliced
450g bought double sponge cake, cut into 3cm cubes
Honey, to serve

MANGO JELLY

2 cups chopped fresh or thawed frozen mango
3 cups mango nectar
6 teaspoons gelatine powder

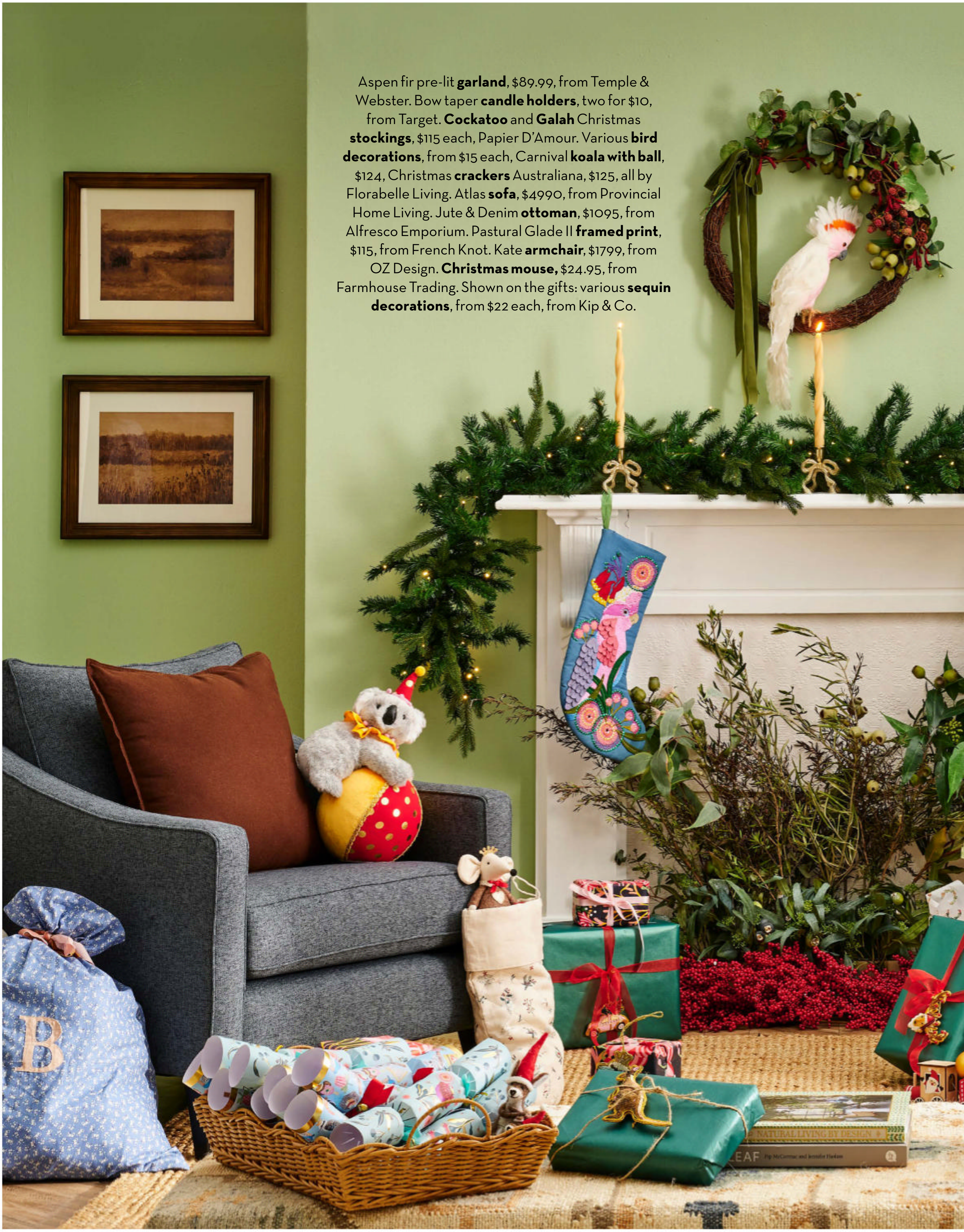
STEP 1 For the jelly, blend or process the mango until smooth. Set aside. Pour the mango nectar into a medium saucepan. Sprinkle over the gelatine. Whisk gently on medium heat for 5 minutes until hot, do not boil. Pour in mango puree. Stir on medium heat for 1–2 minutes, until the mixture is warm (this cooks out the enzyme that breaks down gelatine). Remove from heat. Strain through a sieve into a 4cm deep, 20cm x30cm (base) baking tray or dish. Use a spoon to press all the mango mixture through the sieve. Refrigerate for 4 hours or overnight, until set.
STEP 2 Combine lime juice, ¼ cup caster sugar and water or rum in a small saucepan. Bring to the boil, stirring to dissolve the sugar. Simmer on medium heat for 2 minutes until liquid reduces slightly. Set aside to cool.
STEP 3 Whip cream and remaining ¼ cup sugar to soft peaks. Add sour cream, whisking gently to form soft peaks. Set aside a quarter of the cream mixture. Fold coconut into remaining cream mixture. Cut jelly into 5cm cubes.
STEP 4 Place half the sponge cubes over the base of a 12-cup capacity trifle bowl. Drizzle over half the lime syrup. Top with half the jelly, then half the coconut cream mixture. Repeat layers. Refrigerate for 6 hours or overnight.
STEP 5 Just before serving, arrange half the mango over the top of the trifle, top with reserved cream mixture, remaining mango, extra coconut and drizzle with honey to serve. ■

aussie Christmas

Forget snow and sleigh bells, Aussie Christmas is all about king prawns, avo and Vegemite baubles. Meanwhile, kookaburras and cockatoos provide the carols, whether you like it or not.

Words MEGAN OSBORNE *Styling* NONCI NYONI
Photography JOHN PAUL URIZAR

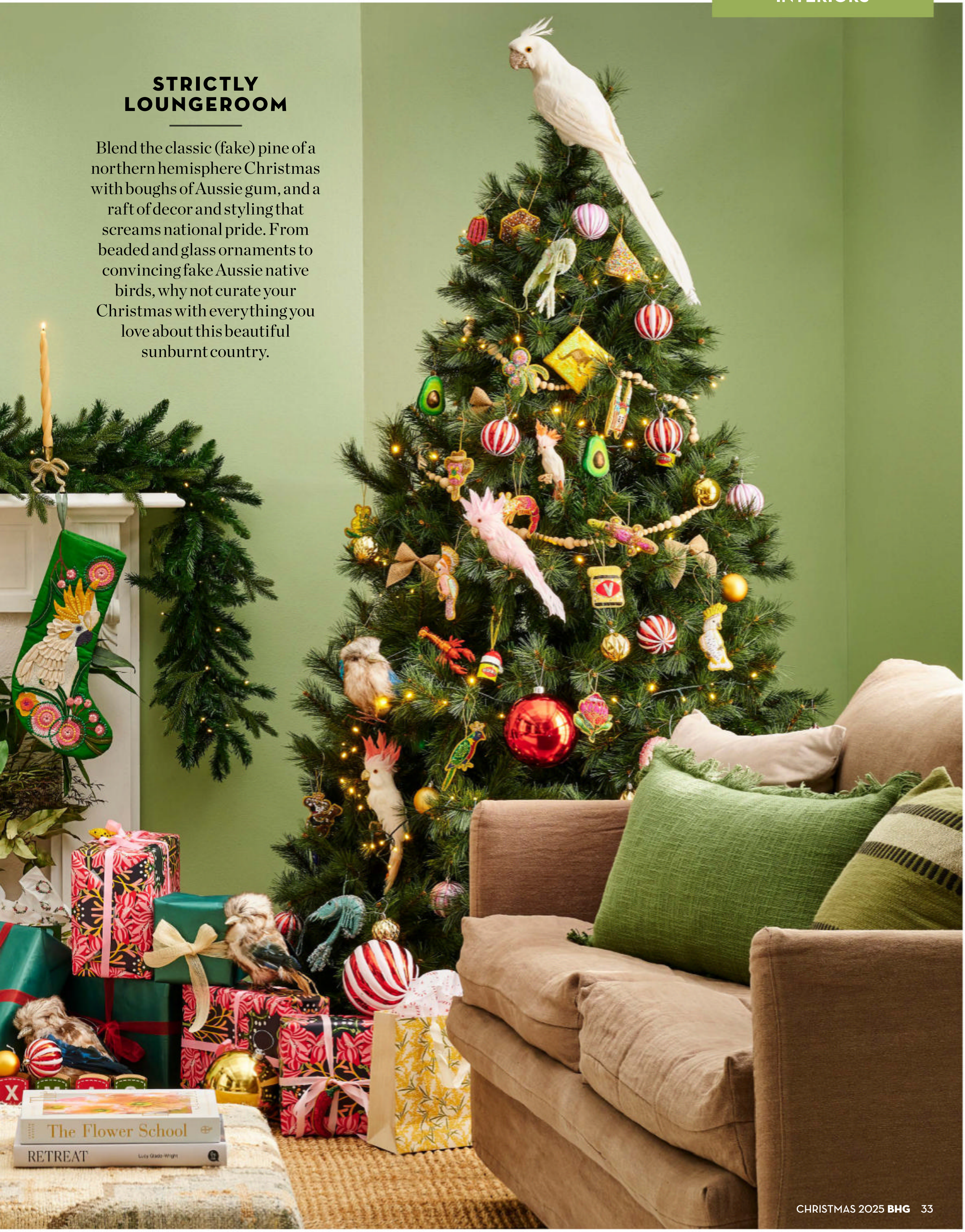
See decoration details on page 34.

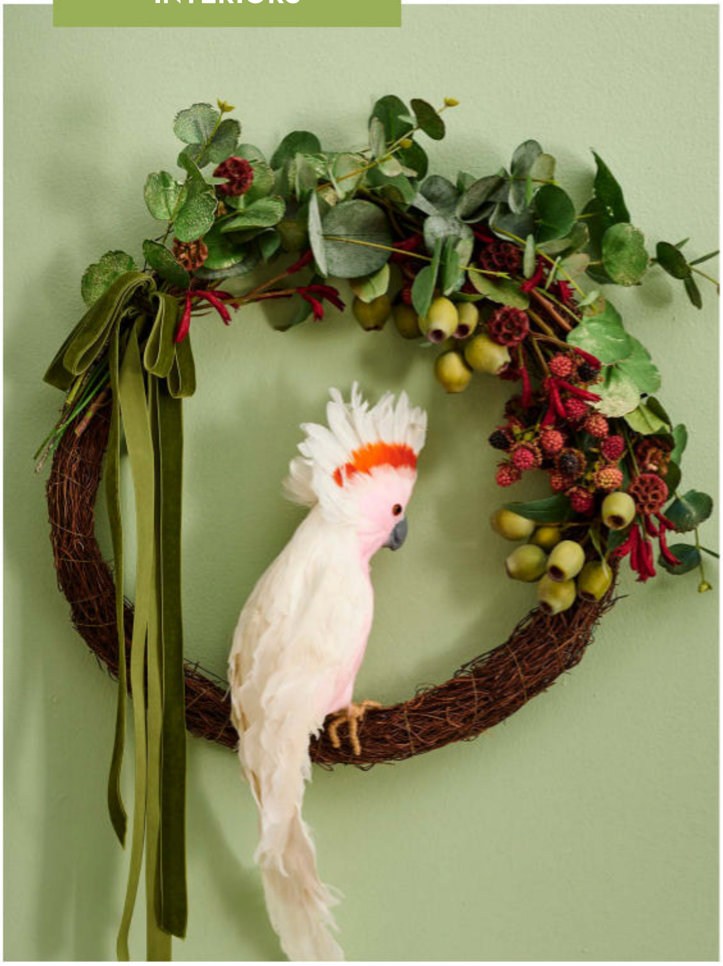


Aspen fir pre-lit **garland**, $89.99, from Temple & Webster. Bow taper **candle holders**, two for $10, from Target. **Cockatoo** and **Galah** Christmas **stockings**, $115 each, Papier D'Amour. Various **bird decorations**, from $15 each, Carnival **koala with ball**, $124, Christmas **crackers** Australiana, $125, all by Florabelle Living. Atlas **sofa**, $4990, from Provincial Home Living. Jute & Denim **ottoman**, $1095, from Alfresco Emporium. Pastural Glade II **framed print**, $115, from French Knot. Kate **armchair**, $1799, from OZ Design. **Christmas mouse,** $24.95, from Farmhouse Trading. Shown on the gifts: various **sequin decorations**, from $22 each, from Kip & Co.

STRICTLY LOUNGEROOM

Blend the classic (fake) pine of a northern hemisphere Christmas with boughs of Aussie gum, and a raft of decor and styling that screams national pride. From beaded and glass ornaments to convincing fake Aussie native birds, why not curate your Christmas with everything you love about this beautiful sunburnt country.


The Flower School
RETREAT
Lucy Glade-Wright



BRING IT TO LIFE

1. Reinvent with local

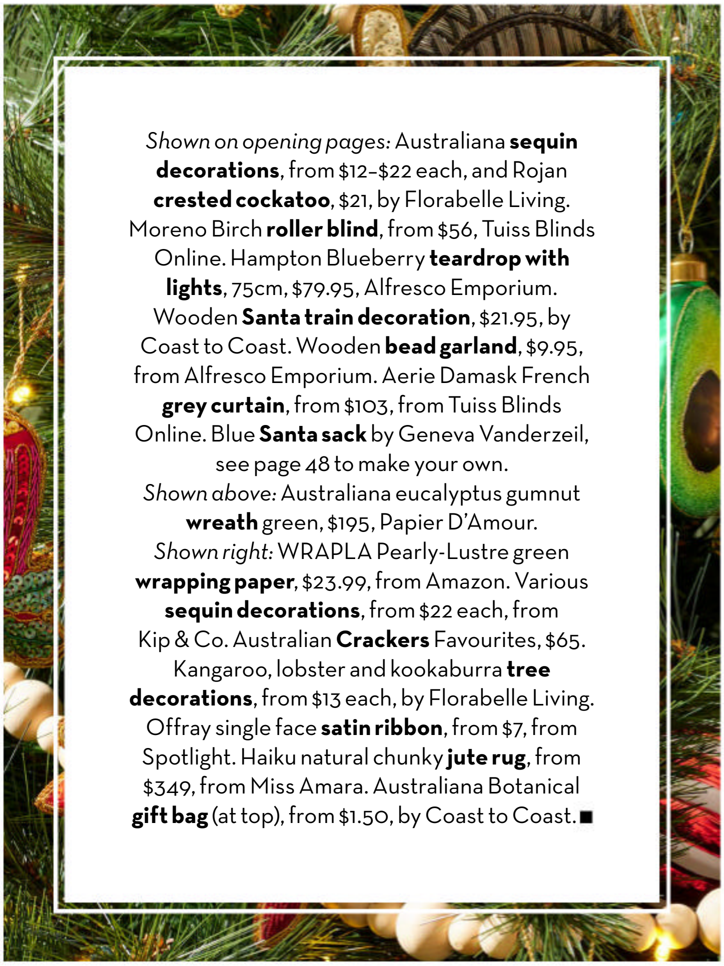
This festive scene blends traditional Christmas with a modern Australian refresh. Take a wreath base, adorn it with faux gum and eucalyptus, then add a gorgeous Major Mitchell cockatoo.

2. Balance chaos and classic

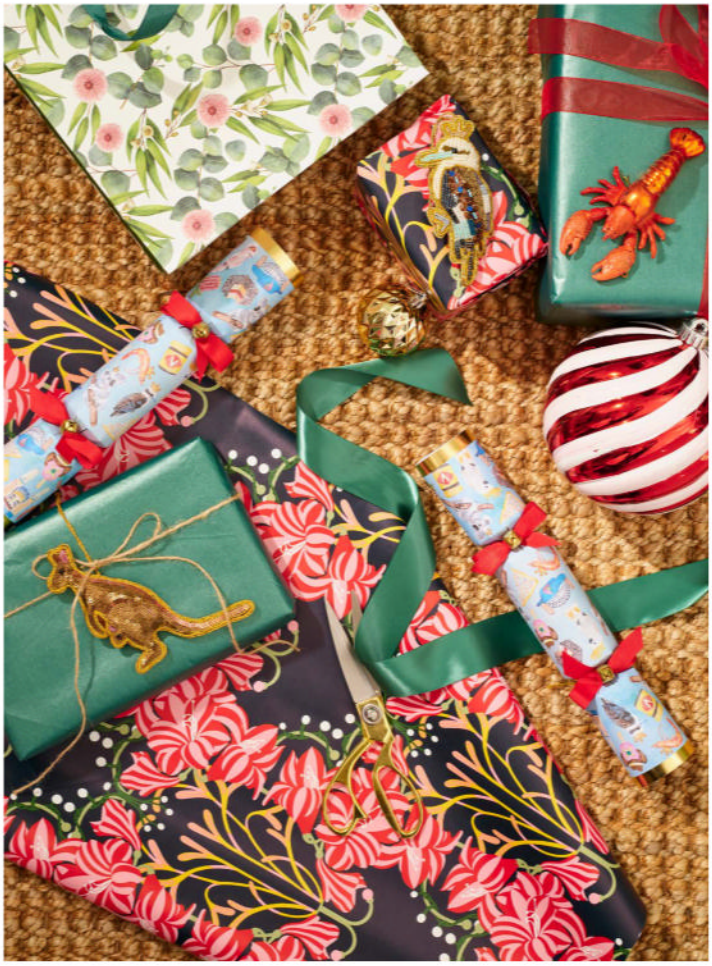
Our tree features an explosion of some of the most iconic things that make being an Aussie so great. From fairy bread and Bubble O' Bill ice creams, to gorgeous sequined waratahs and banksia blooms. With all that fun chaos and colour, add a sense of balance with simple wrapping paper, traditional baubles and small hessian bows.

3. Add a special touch

Baubles don't have to just be for the tree. Add an Aussie touch to your gifting by tying your special beaded or decorative ornaments to gift packages.

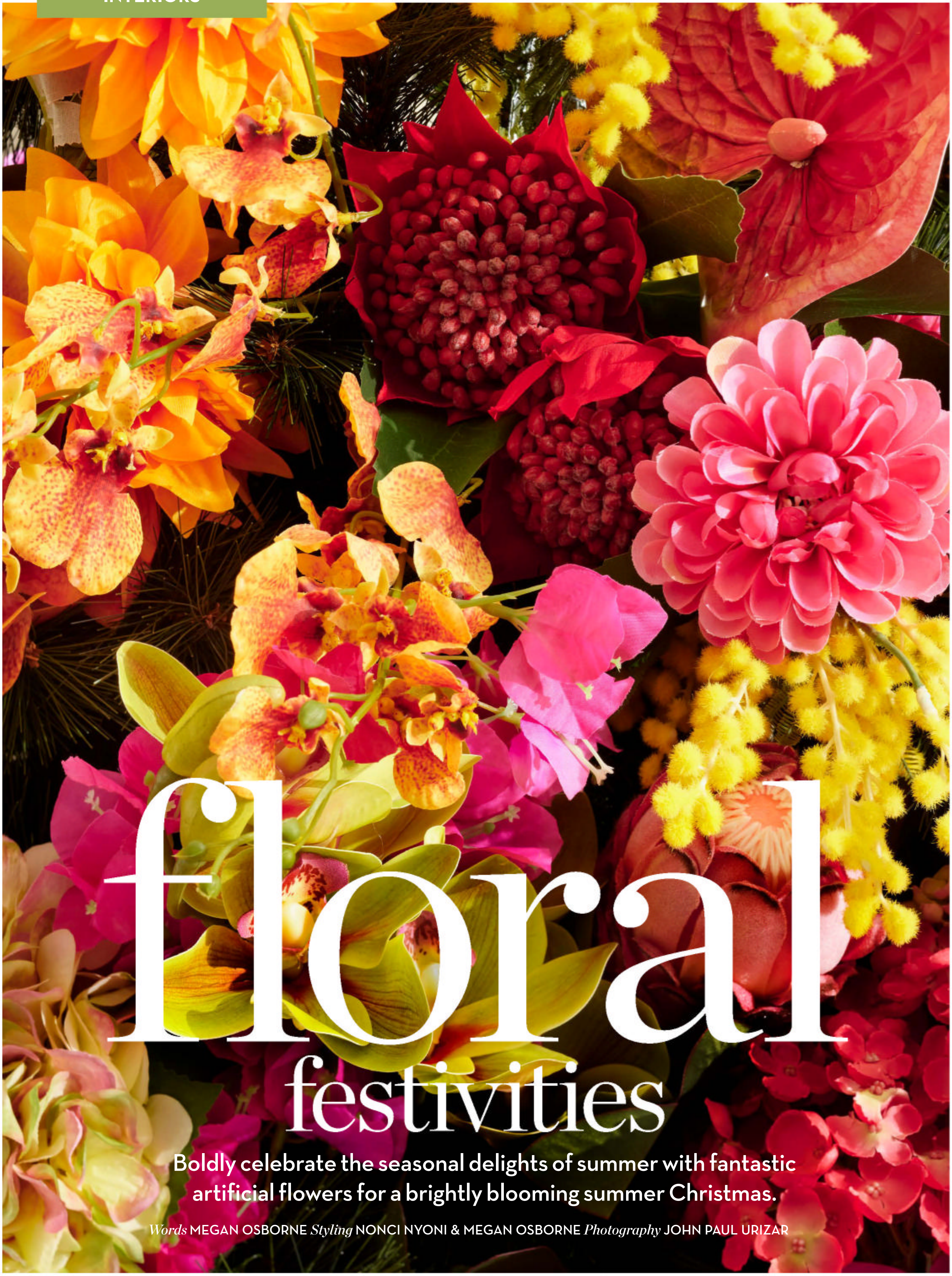


Shown on opening pages: Australiana **sequin decorations**, from $12–$22 each, and Rojan **crested cockatoo**, $21, by Florabelle Living. Moreno Birch **roller blind**, from $56, Tuiss Blinds Online. Hampton Blueberry **teardrop with lights**, 75cm, $79.95, Alfresco Emporium. Wooden **Santa train decoration**, $21.95, by Coast to Coast. Wooden **bead garland**, $9.95, from Alfresco Emporium. Aerie Damask French **grey curtain**, from $103, from Tuiss Blinds Online. Blue **Santa sack** by Geneva Vanderzeil, see page 48 to make your own. *Shown above:* Australiana eucalyptus gumnut **wreath** green, $195, Papier D'Amour. *Shown right:* WRAPLA Pearly-Lustre green **wrapping paper**, $23.99, from Amazon. Various **sequin decorations**, from $22 each, from Kip & Co. Australian **Crackers** Favourites, $65. Kangaroo, lobster and kookaburra **tree decorations**, from $13 each, by Florabelle Living. Offray single face **satin ribbon**, from $7, from Spotlight. Haiku natural chunky **jute rug**, from $349, from Miss Amara. Australiana Botanical **gift bag** (at top), from $1.50, by Coast to Coast. ■



Prices are approximate and a guide only

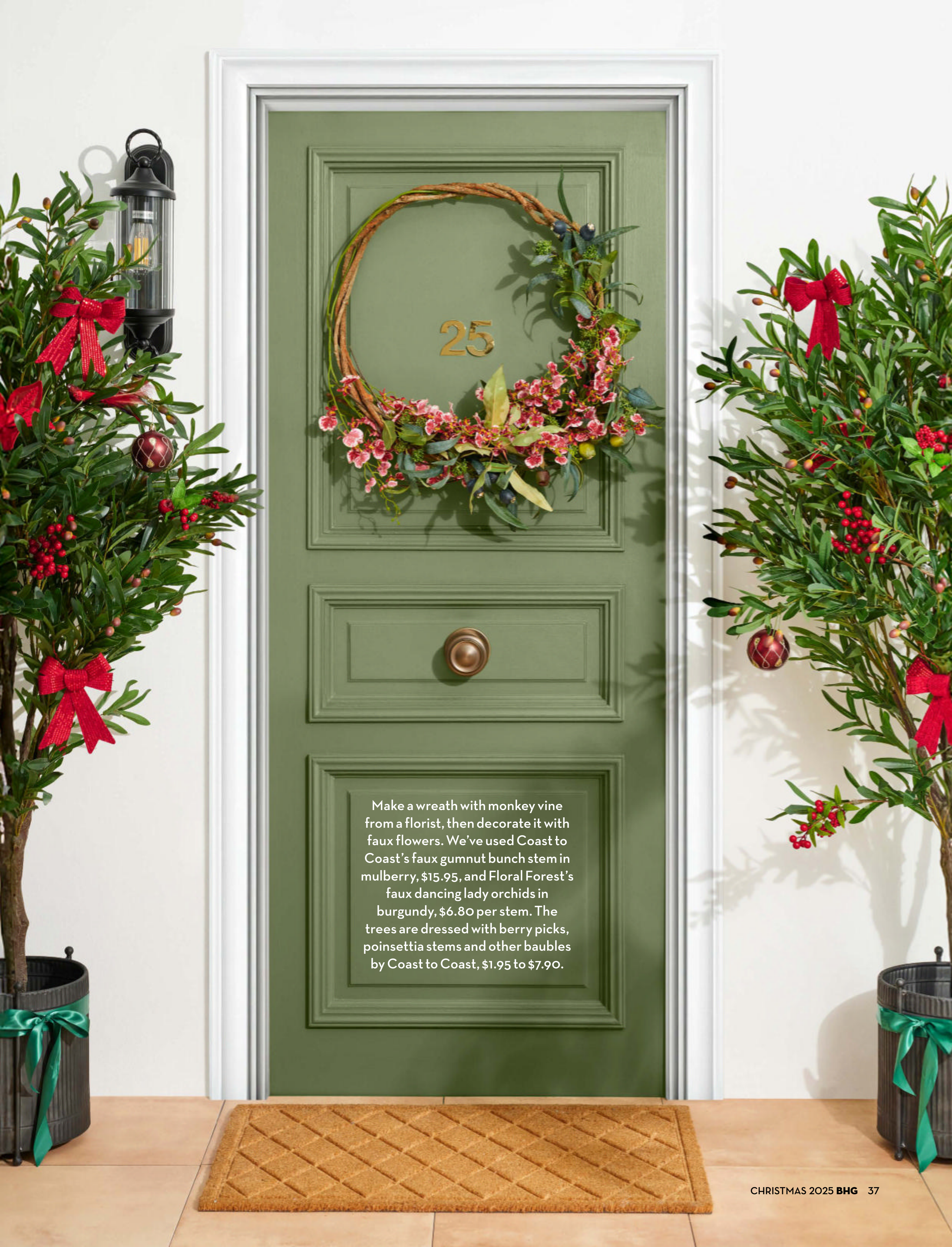
SCAN TO SHOP
Scan this QR code to shop these items



floral festivities

Boldly celebrate the seasonal delights of summer with fantastic artificial flowers for a brightly blooming summer Christmas.

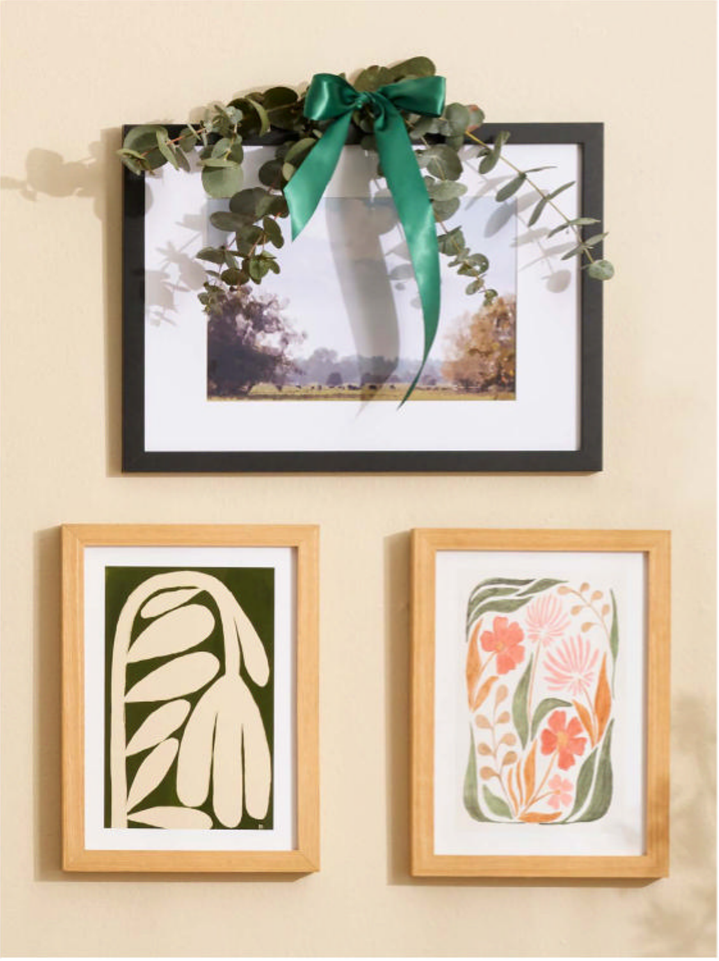
Words MEGAN OSBORNE *Styling* NONCI NYONI & MEGAN OSBORNE *Photography* JOHN PAUL URIZAR



Make a wreath with monkey vine from a florist, then decorate it with faux flowers. We've used Coast to Coast's faux gumnut bunch stem in mulberry, $15.95, and Floral Forest's faux dancing lady orchids in burgundy, $6.80 per stem. The trees are dressed with berry picks, poinsettia stems and other baubles by Coast to Coast, $1.95 to $7.90.

FLORAL FANTASTIC

Create a bloomin' big statement with artificial blooms of silk or plastic! Diagonal pink and orange lines give the tree structure. Pink bougainvillea created our base from bottom left to top right in two bands, then anthurium, proteas and green orchids were used to frame hydrangeas. The orange lines are marked by orange dahlias, orange and red orchids and red waratahs, with pops of yellow wattle.



BRING IT TO LIFE

1. Decorate the unexpected

Elevate your regular artwork displays at Christmas by attaching a sprig of eucalyptus and a festive bow. Use twine to attach to your wall hook.

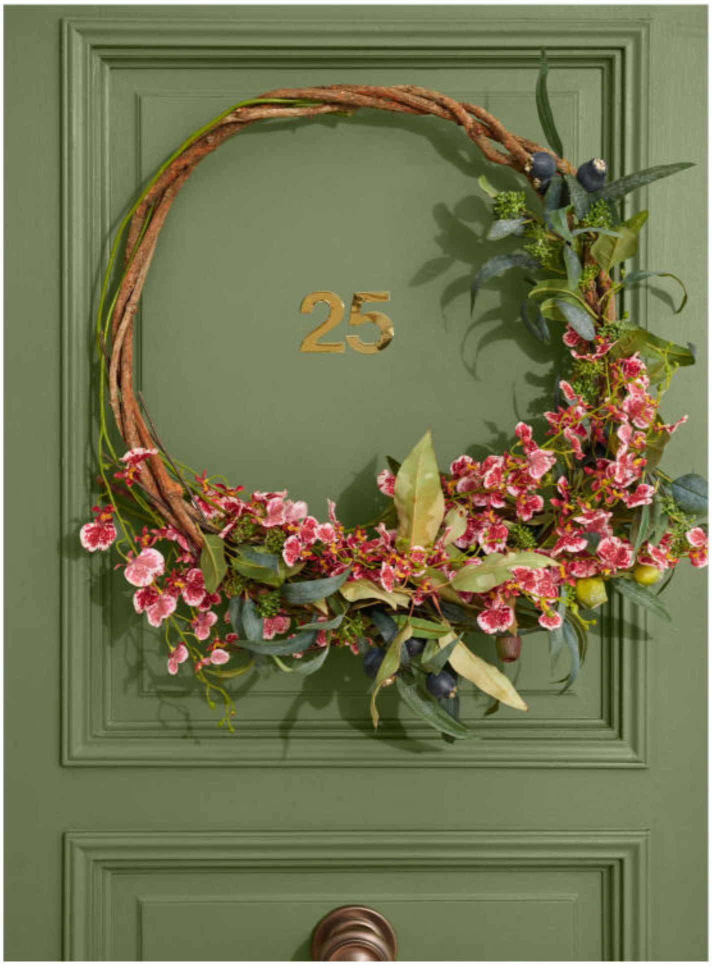
2. Posies in summer

Using either dried or faux florals (we used artificial bouquets from Target), wrap twine around floral bunches to create a bright hanging garland.

3. Next level curb appeal

Who cares about lawns when your front door can look this good? This gorgeous wreath uses completely fake florals, a mix of dancing orchids and gum leaves and nuts, all twined around a around a base branch structure made of monkey vine available from your local florist.

Shown on previous page: **Artificial flowers** are from a range of suppliers, including Florabelle Living Group, Forever Flowering, Koch & Co, The Silk Studio and Target. They are priced mostly under $10 each, ranging from **orchids** for $5 to **red cone hydrangeas** for $68. Evie three-seater **sofa**, $3099, from Oz Design Furniture. Clover mango wood **side table**, $299.99, from Temple & Webster. Mosman **console table**, from $1499, from Freedom. Framed **prints** from Olive et Oriel and French Knot. Rui wall **sconce**, $900, from Bloomingdales Lighting. Savona washable **rug**, from $249, from Miss Amara. *Shown on opening page*: **Wreath** features Coast to Coast **faux gumnut**, $15.95, and Floral Forest **faux dancing lady orchids**, $6.80 per stem. Artificial **olive trees**, $395 each, in Minori **planters**, $70 each, from Provincial Home Living. Diamond etch **doormat**, $49, from Provincial Home Living. Gladestry **exterior wall light**, $149, from Fat Shack Vintage. Sarlat **door knob** in signature brass, $289, from Iver. Tiles from Beaumont Tiles. *Opposite page*: Coast to Coast cottage with drawers Advent calendar, $36.95. ■



Prices are approximate and a guide only

Merry Christmas
The Flower School
RETREAT
Lucy Glade-Wright

SCAN TO SHOP
Scan this QR code to shop the look.

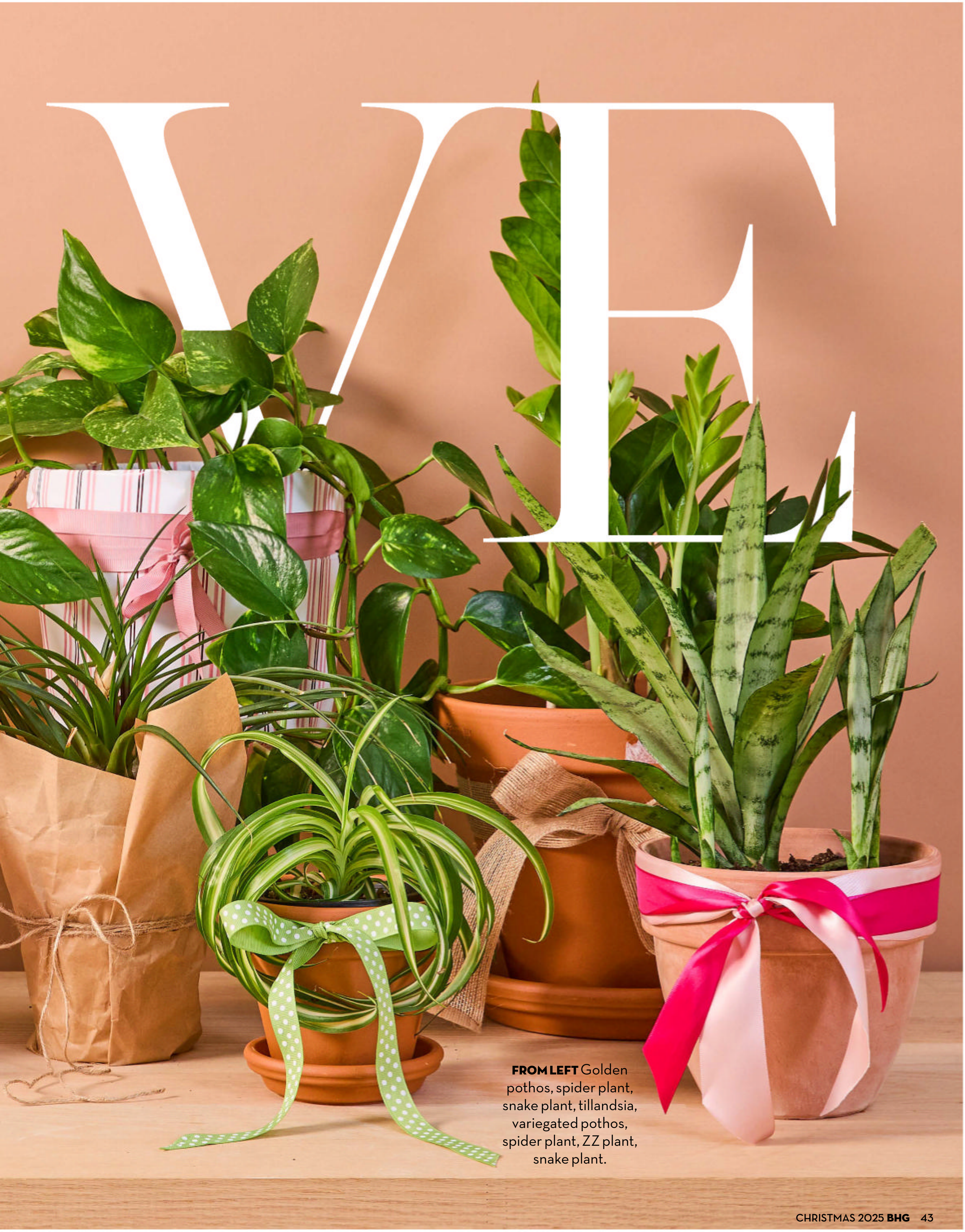
GROW THE LO

Find out what plants are good to give beginner green thumbs to help them bloom into keen gardeners.

When you choose a plant as a gift, it becomes a constant reminder to the recipient of the relationship between the two of you. But for that to happen, the plant needs to survive! Think carefully about what to give someone who has never cared for plants before, or has had plants but lacked the knowledge or time to keep them alive. Then there's the expense – the price of so many things goes up at Christmas, plants included. Here's how a bit of propagation or division lets you grow new plants from old, for free.

Words JENNY DILLON *Photography* PHILLIP CASTLETON *Styling* NONCI NYONI

VE



FROM LEFT Golden pothos, spider plant, snake plant, tillandsia, variegated pothos, spider plant, ZZ plant, snake plant.

Gifts for the brown thumbs

Pothos: You can't ignore pothos (devil's ivy) even if you want to – its trailing stems can grow more than 30cm a month. You can place a pothos high on a mantelpiece or bookcase and let the vines tumble down, train them to wrap around the railing of a staircase or deck, or pop a narrow pole or mini-trellis in the pot so they soar. The green, heart-shaped leaves can come with white, yellow or pale green variegations. The plant will let you know when it needs a drink as its leaves will start drooping. It's best watered at least monthly to keep the potting mix moist.

Spider plant: It's the retro plant that's back in style, even though its fountain of long slender leaves sometimes makes it look as though it's having a bad hair day. What makes it special are the long, wiry stems that thread through the foliage and produce tiny, white, star-like flowers, from which emerge baby plants that look like spiders. You can cut these babies away from the mother plant just above a brown knob on the stem, put in a glass of water and watch roots emerge before planting in a new pot. Spider plants are renowned for being easy to care for because they have thick, fleshy roots and rhizomes (underground stems) that store water, allowing them to survive inconsistent watering.

Tillandsia: A member of the bromeliad family, this epiphyte survives on the air around it – hence its common name of air plant. Care is minimal – in hot weather, tillandsia plants need misting once a week with a very weak solution of organic liquid fertiliser. When it's cooler, mist every couple of weeks and skip the fertiliser. Tillandsia can also be glued or wired to a stone that sits in a shallow bowl of water to create a humid atmosphere. Refill the bowl when the water evaporates. Those with velvety, silvery leaves have adapted to grow in dry conditions and bright light, while those with smooth, green leaves prefer filtered light and medium-high humidity.

Snake plant: These are the hardest plants to kill. As succulents, they store water in their leaves. They make an architectural statement by standing tall, and you'll know when to water them because one of those long leaves will begin to keel over. The leaves will stand up straight again once they've had a drink. A quality potting mix ensures they'll get adequate nutrients for a couple of years.

ZZ plant: This is also a succulent but it stores its water in thick rhizomes in the soil. So, if you forget to water it for months, it still looks like a knockout. Normally it has handsome, glossy, dark green, leathery leaves, but when it's used up its water reservoir, the leaves start looking soft and limp. Grow in quality potting mix to provide it with the nutrients it needs.

Gifts for the passionate gardener

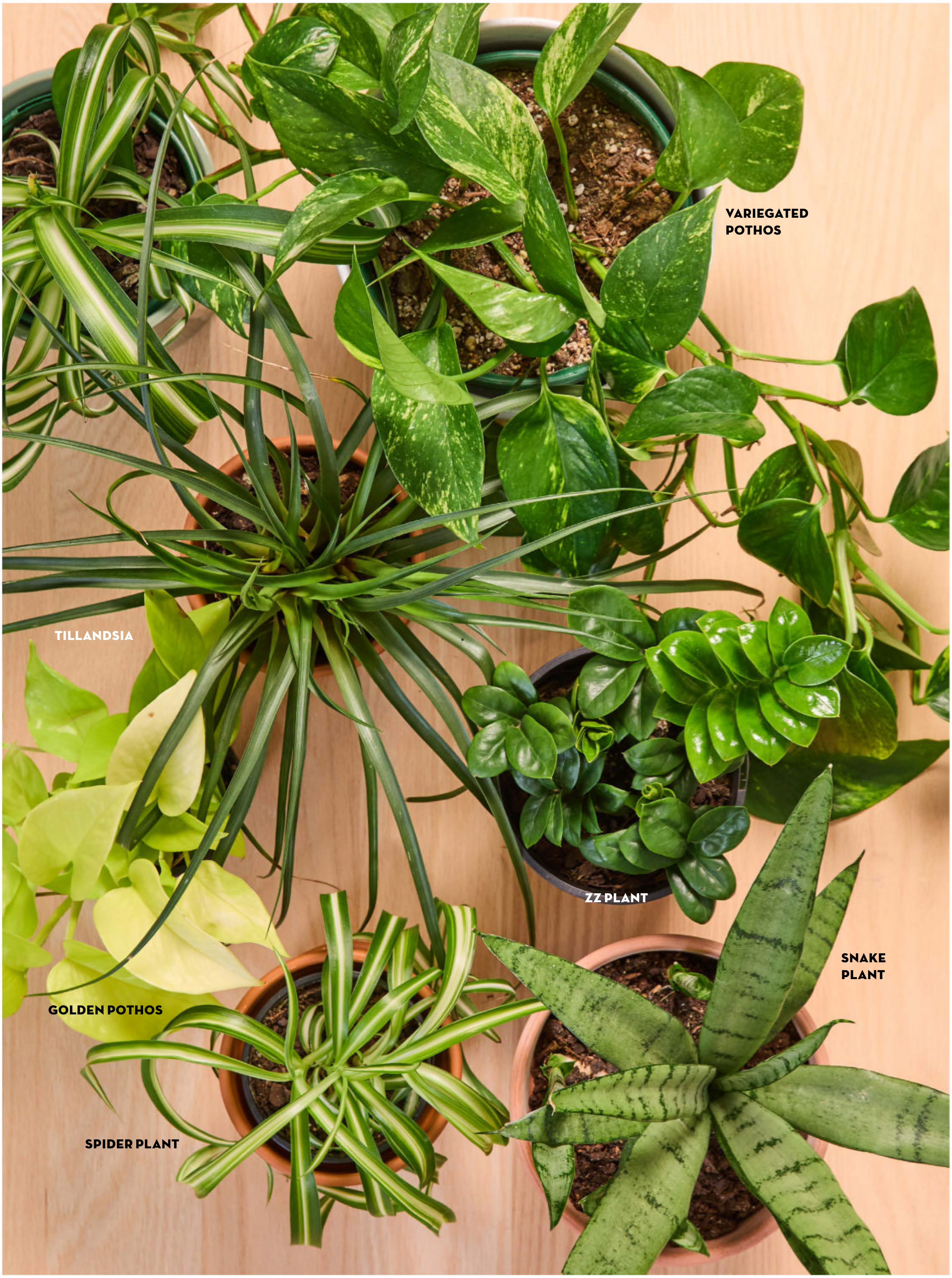
As one who falls into this category, I can tell you plants as gifts are a no-no. We like to choose what we're growing.

This also applies to gardening tools, such as secateurs. We may have several abandoned under bushes after being deemed useless because we've found the one that works for us – the grip and the lock-unlock mechanism is just perfect. After all, every hand is different.

It's the same with gloves. You'd never buy paint for Michelangelo – and every gardener considers themselves an artist, be it ever so humble.

Instead of a gardening tool, a gift voucher is the best option. We'll probably go out and buy bags of manure, and this saves you the trouble of having to gift wrap them.

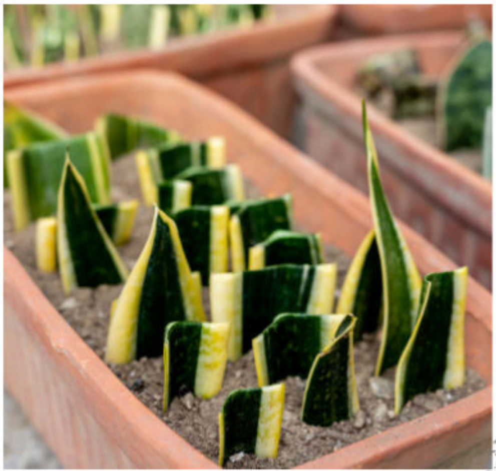
Or go for something we'd never think to buy, such as a 'stylish' sunhat or a 'sexy' tradies' tool belt that can hold secateurs, snips, clippers and weed pullers.


VARIEGATED POTHOS
TILLANDSIA
ZZ PLANT
SNAKE PLANT
GOLDEN POTHOS
SPIDER PLANT

Create plant gifts for free

Leaf cuttings

This is a simple and free way to clone your plants – and doing it with snake plants means you can get multiple clones from just one leaf blade.



MAKE NEW SNAKE PLANTS FROM LEAF CUTTINGS

Here's how

STEP 1 Cut a leaf at its base with clean, sharp secateurs.

STEP 2 Cut leaf into sections about 10–12cm long. Use a thick black marker to draw an arrow pointing to the base of the cut.

STEP 3 Allow cuttings to dry for 1–2 days in a shaded spot.

STEP 4 Fill a pot with potting or propagating mix and insert each leaf piece into the mix. Be sure you put the cutting with the downward arrow into the mix. You can grow numerous leaf sections in the one pot.

STEP 5 Water the potting mix well and place the pot in a semi-shaded spot. Keep the mix moist but not wet, or the cuttings may rot. Roots should form in 2–4 months.

GOOD TO KNOW

CREATING CLONES MEANS YOU GET THE SAME DESIRABLE TRAITS.

Stem cuttings

Similar to leaf cuttings, with stem cuttings you're making clones of the mother plant.

MAKE NEW POTHOS PLANTS FROM STEM CUTTINGS

Here's how

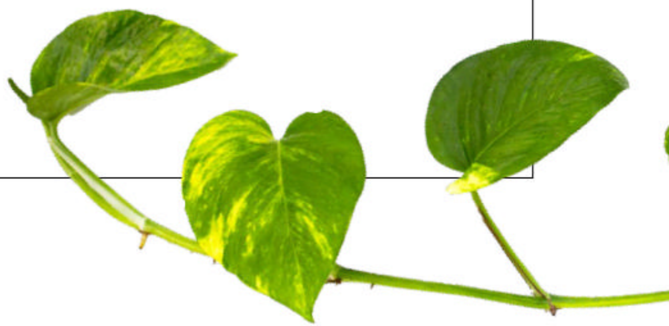
STEP 1 With clean, sharp secateurs or scissors, cut a stem with 3–4 leaves about 2cm below the lowest leaf. Cut at an angle.

STEP 2 Remove lowest leaf.

STEP 3 Place stem in a glass of water, keeping the remaining leaves out of the water.

STEP 4 Watch as the roots start to emerge over the next week to 10 days.

STEP 5 When roots are 5–6cm long, put cuttings into quality potting mix and place in bright, indirect light. Keep mix moist.



Simple propagation

Propagation can be fraught for novices, but spider plants make it easy. They produce babies – or spiderettes – that delicately dangle from long, thin stems trailing from the centre of the mother plant and have the potential to become future mums.

PROPAGATE SPIDER PLANTS

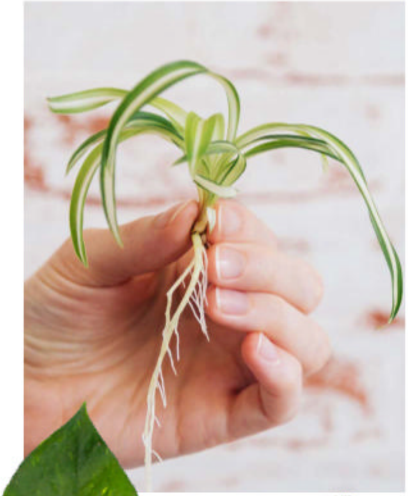
Here's how

STEP 1 Look for small, brownish knobs on the stem of the spiderette – these are the beginnings of new roots.

STEP 2 Snip the 'umbilical cords' just above the knob with clean, sharp secateurs or scissors.

STEP 3 Put the cutting in a glass of water for about five days, or until roots emerge from the brown knobs.

STEP 4 Plant in a pot with quality potting mix and water well.



Plant division

Spring and early summer are the best times to replace the potting mix in your pot plants. After a year or so, the mix collapses so air and water can't get to the roots and the mix has also lost most of its nutrients.

Once you take some plants – such as snake plants, sedum, echeveria, cliveas and kangaroo paws – out of the pot you can see the degree of root clumping that has occurred. You can either replant them in a larger container or divide them and give away the spares as gifts.

DIVIDE YOUR SNAKE PLANTS

Here's how

STEP 1 Remove the plant from the pot or garden.

STEP 2 Lay it on a table and gently open up around the roots.

STEP 3 Look for an opening in the clump where a cut can be made that includes at least three leaf blades, then with clean, sharp secateurs or scissors, cut through. Voila! Two plants instead of one – maybe even three or four.

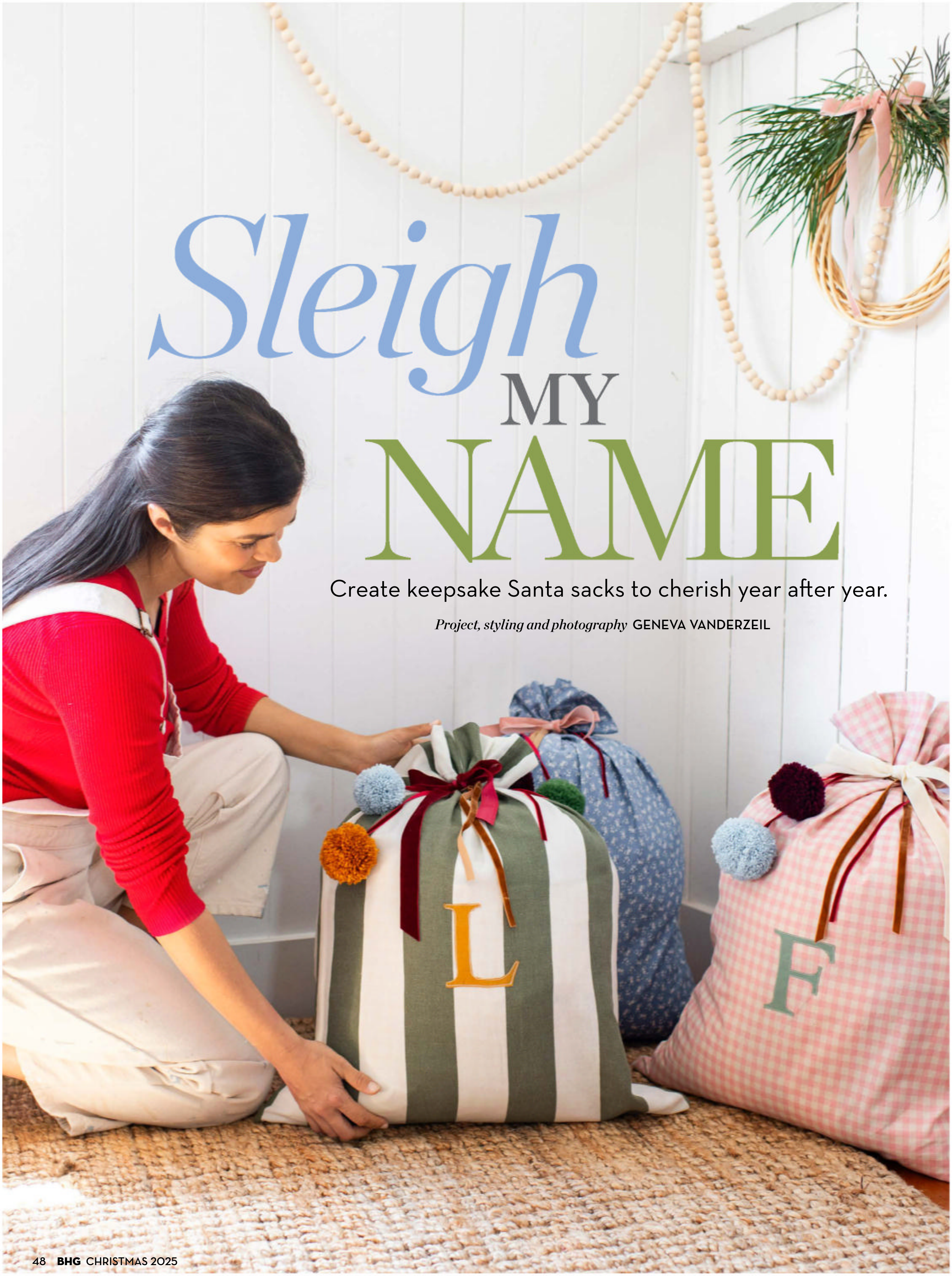
STEP 4 Fill pots with potting mix and a plant. Water well. ■

Photography Adobe Stock

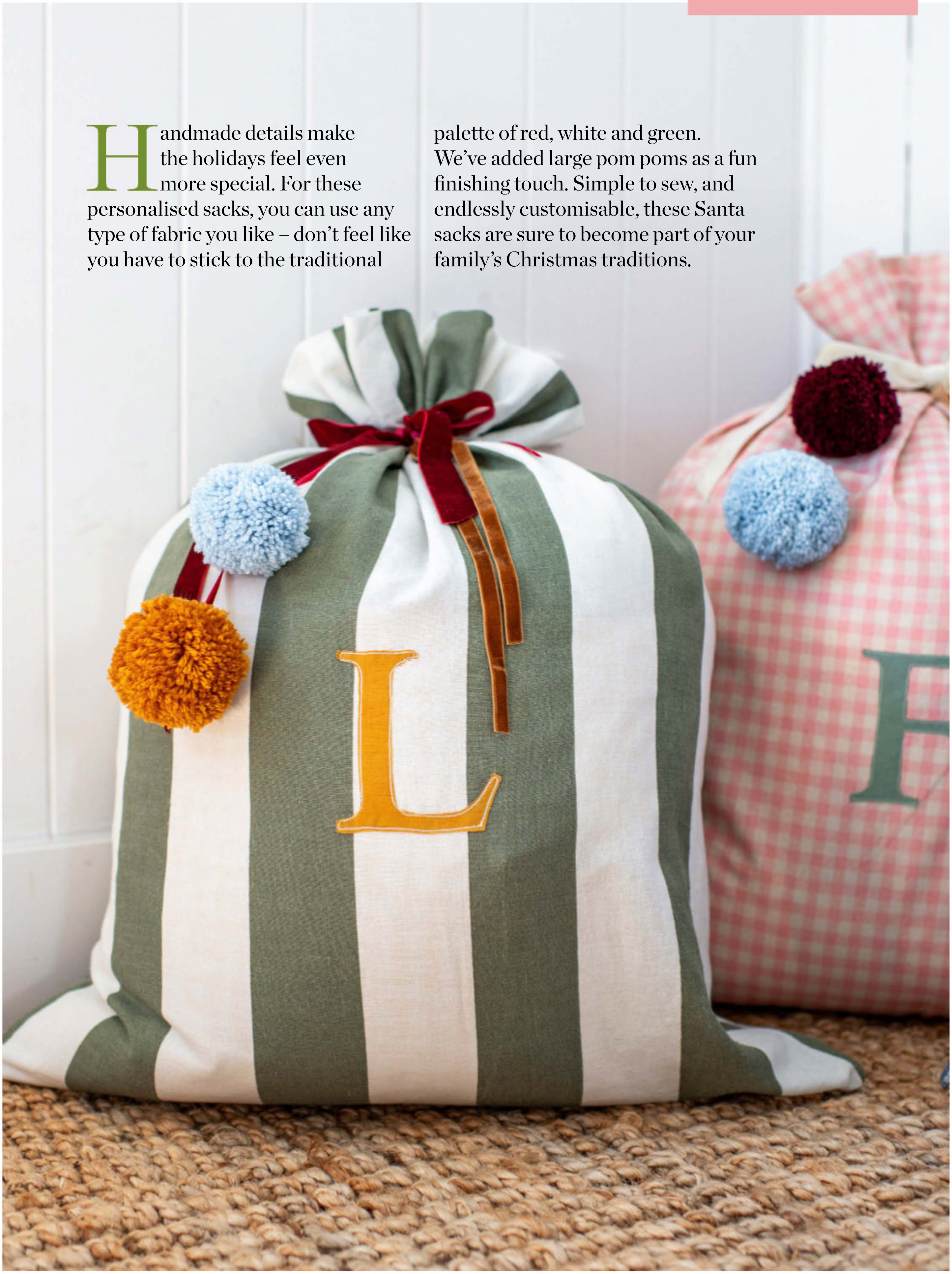
Sleigh MY NAME

Create keepsake Santa sacks to cherish year after year.

Project, styling and photography GENEVA VANDERZEIL



Handmade details make the holidays feel even more special. For these personalised sacks, you can use any type of fabric you like – don't feel like you have to stick to the traditional palette of red, white and green. We've added large pom poms as a fun finishing touch. Simple to sew, and endlessly customisable, these Santa sacks are sure to become part of your family's Christmas traditions.



EASY STEPS TO MAKE A PERSONALISED SANTA SACK

Gather your supplies

- 1 metre mid-weight fabric (calico, linen, canvas or cotton)
- A small piece of contrasting fabric for the initial
- Printed paper letter template
- Spray adhesive
- Piece of cardboard (to fit letter)
- Thread (to match or contrast)
- Ribbon
- Pom poms (optional)

You'll also need

Sewing machine, fabric scissors, pins or fabric clips, ruler and fabric marker.

How to

STEP 1 Cut two 60 x 80cm rectangles from your main fabric, then press with an iron to smooth out creases.

STEP 2 Using Word on a computer, choose font for the initial, print it at your desired size and cut out the paper letter to make your template.

STEP 3 Spray the back of the letter with adhesive, then stick to cardboard. Cut out around the letter to make the template. Place template on the contrasting fabric, mark around its shape and cut out using fabric scissors.

STEP 4 Position the fabric initial on the front rectangle, then pin in place. Sew around the edge to secure.

STEP 5 With right sides together and allowing a generous seam, sew the two rectangles along both sides and the bottom, leaving the top open.

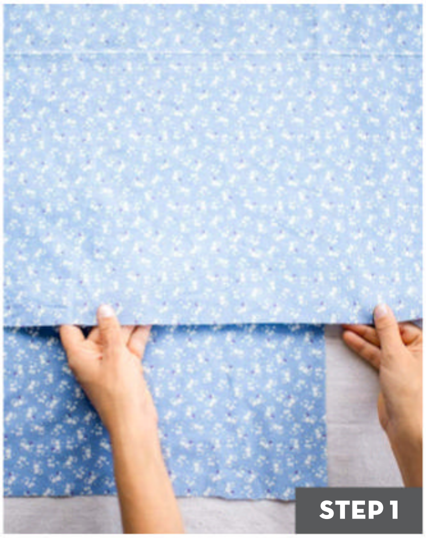
STEP 6 Fold the top edge down 8cm to the inside to form a hem and sew all the way around.

STEP 7 Tie the sack closed with ribbon. Add pom poms if you wish.

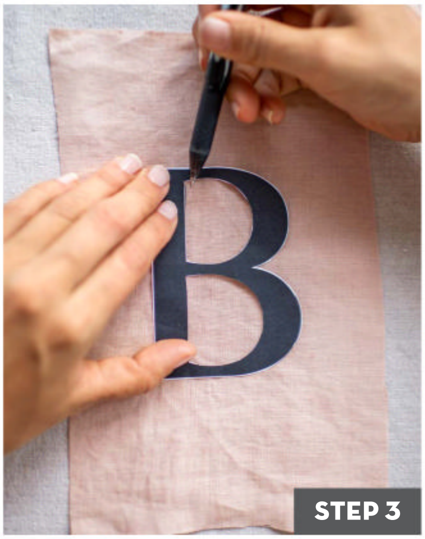
Safety notes

Take your time with small details like sewing around the letter.

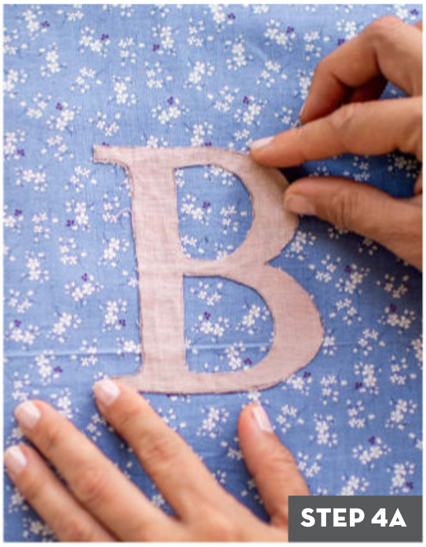
Keep pins and needles in a pin cushion or container so they don't get lost.



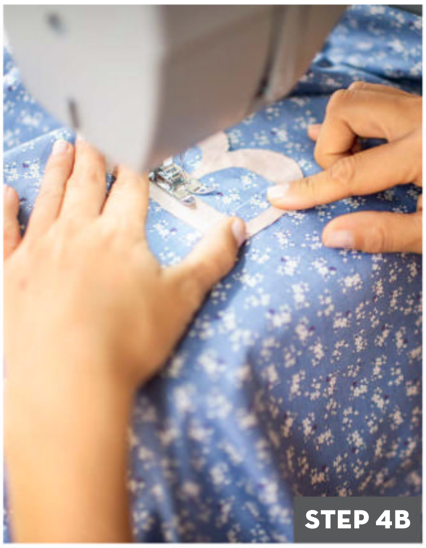
STEP 1



STEP 3



STEP 4A

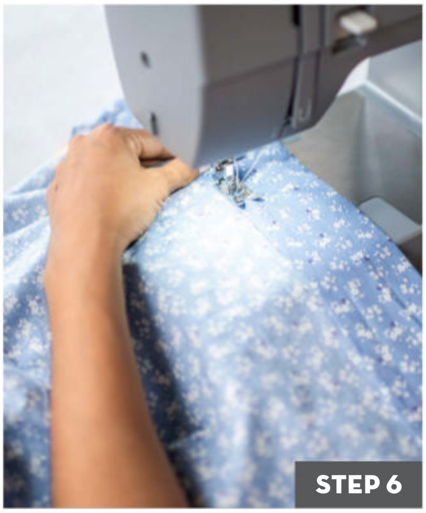


STEP 4B

QUICK TIPS

- Choose a sturdy fabric so the sack holds its shape.
- Mark sewing lines lightly with chalk or a washable fabric pen.
- You can swap the initial for a festive motif (like a star or tree) if you like. ■

FOR PROJECT SUPPLIES, SEE STOCKISTS ON PAGE 188.



STEP 6

> THESE SANTA SACKS ARE SURE TO BECOME PART OF YOUR TRADITIONS.

GENEVA VANDERZEIL, CREATIVE PROJECTS EDITOR

A FESTIVE FEAST

Put a spin on the classic roast chook and create a flavourful side to match.

Photography TIM ROBERTS *Styling* LUCY BUSUTTIL *Recipes* MATT MORAN

APRICOT AND CHESTNUT STUFFED CHICKEN

Recipe on page 56

Christmas is a special time on the calendar for chef and restauratuer Matt Moran. He loves nothing more than cooking fresh, delicious food for his family and friends while spending quality time together. Mixing the traditional (think: roast chook) with the modern (think: My Perfect Stock), Matt knows that preparation is key to being able to share his love language of food while being able to enjoy the event, too. We sat down with Matt to talk about his favourite festive foods and his tips and recipes to help you have a memorable Christmas.

BHG: What's the one affordable ingredient that feels instantly 'Christmassy' on the table?
For me, it's the glaze on the ham. A bit of maple syrup, mustard and cloves – all simple, affordable ingredients that fill the kitchen with the smells of Christmas. They make the whole day feel festive.

BHG: What's your trick for stress-free Christmas sides or salads that don't cost a fortune?
Use in-season vegies and get your prep done early. The secret to being the perfect host is all in the preparation. Choose a menu where you can prepare at least some of the dishes before the big day. I love making a toasted couscous, cranberry, pistachio and feta salad for Christmas Day. You can prepare the quick pickle and honey mustard dressing a couple of days ahead, then cook the couscous with My Perfect Vegetable Stock the day before. On Christmas morning, all you have to do is toss everything together.

BHG: How do you recommend managing leftovers so nothing goes to waste over the holidays?
You don't need to make 10 different dishes. Just pick one or two hero mains, a few fresh salads, and some beautiful vegies done well. That's more than enough. There's nothing better than the leftovers in the days after Christmas. Ham can be used in so many ways – a big fry-up for breakfast, a frittata or in a sandwich.

What's a nostalgic Christmas dish from your family that you still cook today?
That would have to be pudding. There's nothing better than a classic Christmas pudding – rich with dried fruits and spices, steamed for hours, and served with warm brandy custard. It's a proper old-school dessert, and it wouldn't be Christmas without it.

What does Christmas look like for you? Paint us a picture of the day.
Christmas at my place always starts in the kitchen on the day before. Then I'm up at 5.30am and pretty much cook all day – I love it. You'll always see a ham, goose, turkey with all the trimmings – my favourite is an apricot and chestnut stuffing, and a couple of salads. There's always seafood, too, and good wine!

> “CHOOSE A MENU WHERE YOU CAN PREPARE AT LEAST SOME OF THE DISHES BEFORE THE BIG DAY.”
>
> MATT MORAN, CHEF

TOASTED COUSCOUS, CRANBERRY, PISTACHIO AND FETA SALAD

Recipe on page 56

APRICOT AND CHESTNUT STUFFED CHICKEN

Preparation time 20 mins
Cooking time 1½ hours
Serves 4

100g butter, chopped
1 brown onion, finely chopped
1 garlic clove, chopped finely
100g bacon, cut into lardons
1 teaspoon finely chopped sage
50g white breadcrumbs
100ml My Perfect Chicken Stock
200g pork sausage mince
50g dried apricots, chopped
50g peeled chestnuts, chopped
1 tablespoon finely chopped flat-leaf parsley
Sea-salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper, to season
1.6kg chicken

STEP 1 Preheat oven to 180°C/160°C fan-forced.
STEP 2 To make the stuffing, melt butter in a large frying pan on medium-high heat. Add onion and sauté for 2-3 minutes or until translucent. Add garlic, bacon and sage and sauté for 4-5 minutes. Add breadcrumbs and stock, then cook until the stock is absorbed. Transfer mixture to a large baking tray and set aside to cool. In a large bowl, combine onion mixture and remaining stuffing ingredients. Stir to combine. Season.
STEP 3 For the chicken, remove the wish bone from the top of the chicken, and use a paper towel to clean and dry the cavity of the chicken. Fill the cavity with stuffing. Using butcher's twine, truss the legs and wings of the chicken to hold its shape.
STEP 4 Place chicken in a roasting tray and bake for 1½ hours or until the chicken is golden and cooked through. Remove from the oven and allow to cool slightly before carving and serving.

TOASTED COUSCOUS, CRANBERRY, PISTACHIO AND FETA SALAD

Preparation time 15 mins plus 20 mins marinating
Cooking time 5 mins
Serves 4

1½ cups My Perfect Vegetable Stock
1½ cups couscous
2 teaspoons olive oil
1 bunch mint, leaves picked
1 bunch parsley, leaves picked
3 quarter wedges preserved lemon
½ cup pistachio nuts, roasted and roughly chopped
½ cup dried cranberries, roughly chopped
100g marinated goat's feta
Sea-salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper, to season

QUICK PICKLED RED ONIONS

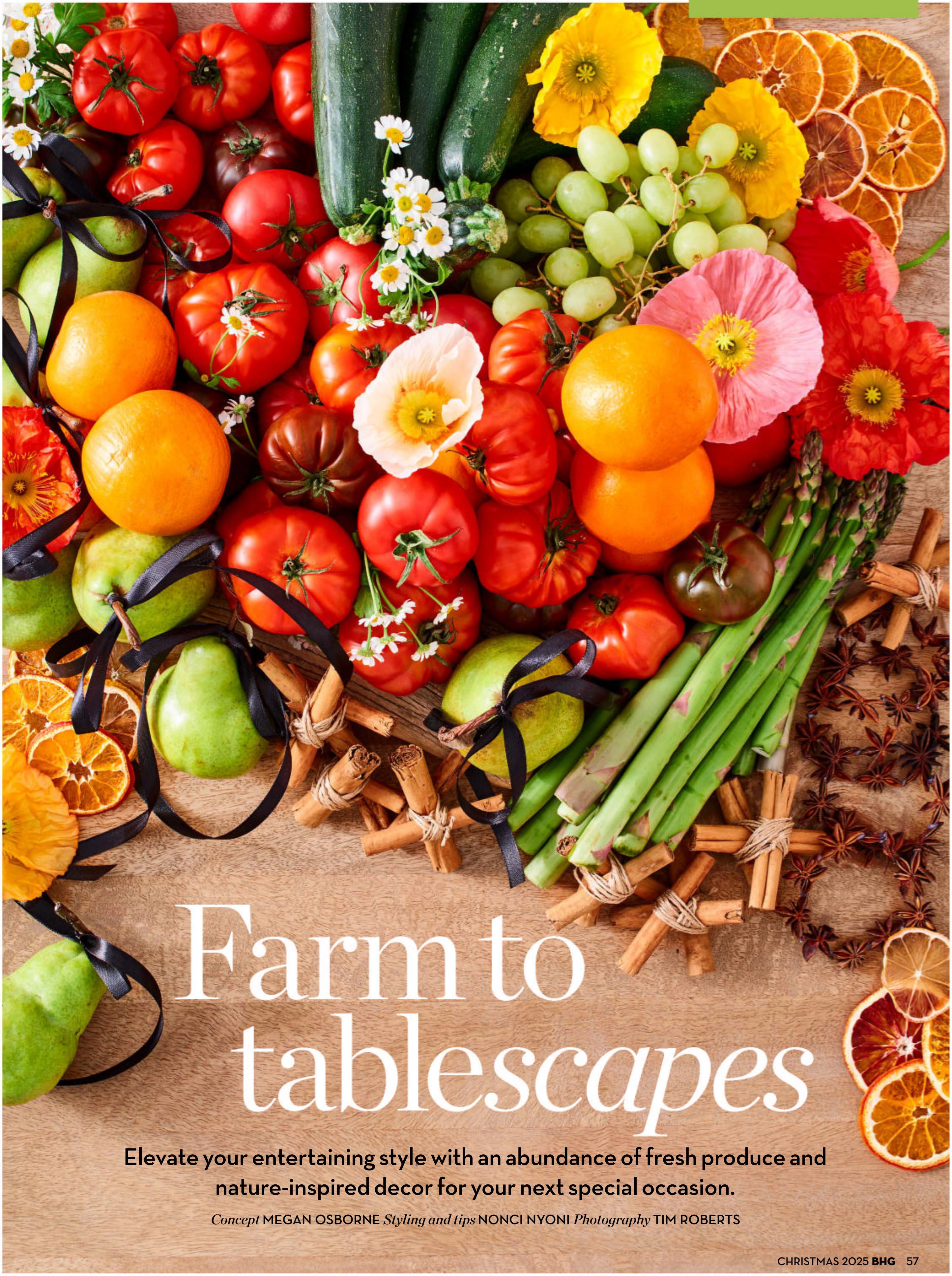
½ red onion, finely diced
2 teaspoons sea salt
1 tablespoon chardonnay vinegar

HONEY MUSTARD DRESSING

1 tablespoon dijon mustard
2 teaspoons honey
1 tablespoon chardonnay vinegar
1 tablespoon lemon juice
⅓ cup olive oil

STEP 1 For the quick pickled onions, place the onion, salt and chardonnay vinegar in a small bowl and stir through. Allow to marinade for 20 minutes. Strain from the vinegar before using.
STEP 2 For the dressing, place mustard, honey, chardonnay vinegar and lemon juice in a small bowl. Whisk together, then slowly add in the oil while continuously whisking to emulsify the oil into the dressing.
STEP 3 Place vegetable stock in a saucepan and bring to a simmer on medium heat. Place the couscous in a separate saucepan and cook on medium heat until toasted and golden. Transfer to a heatproof bowl, stir in oil. Pour simmering stock over couscous and cover. Set aside for 5 minutes, then fluff the couscous with a fork.
STEP 4 Roughly chop the mint and parsley leaves. Remove the flesh and pith from the preserved lemon and discard, then finely cut the preserved lemon rind into thin slices.
STEP 5 In a large mixing bowl, place cooked couscous, pistachios, cranberries and pickled onions. Mix until combined. Add mint, parsley and lemon rind, drizzle with the dressing, then mix together. Season. Place the salad into a serving bowl and crumble the feta over to serve. ■

Food preparation Ismat Awan



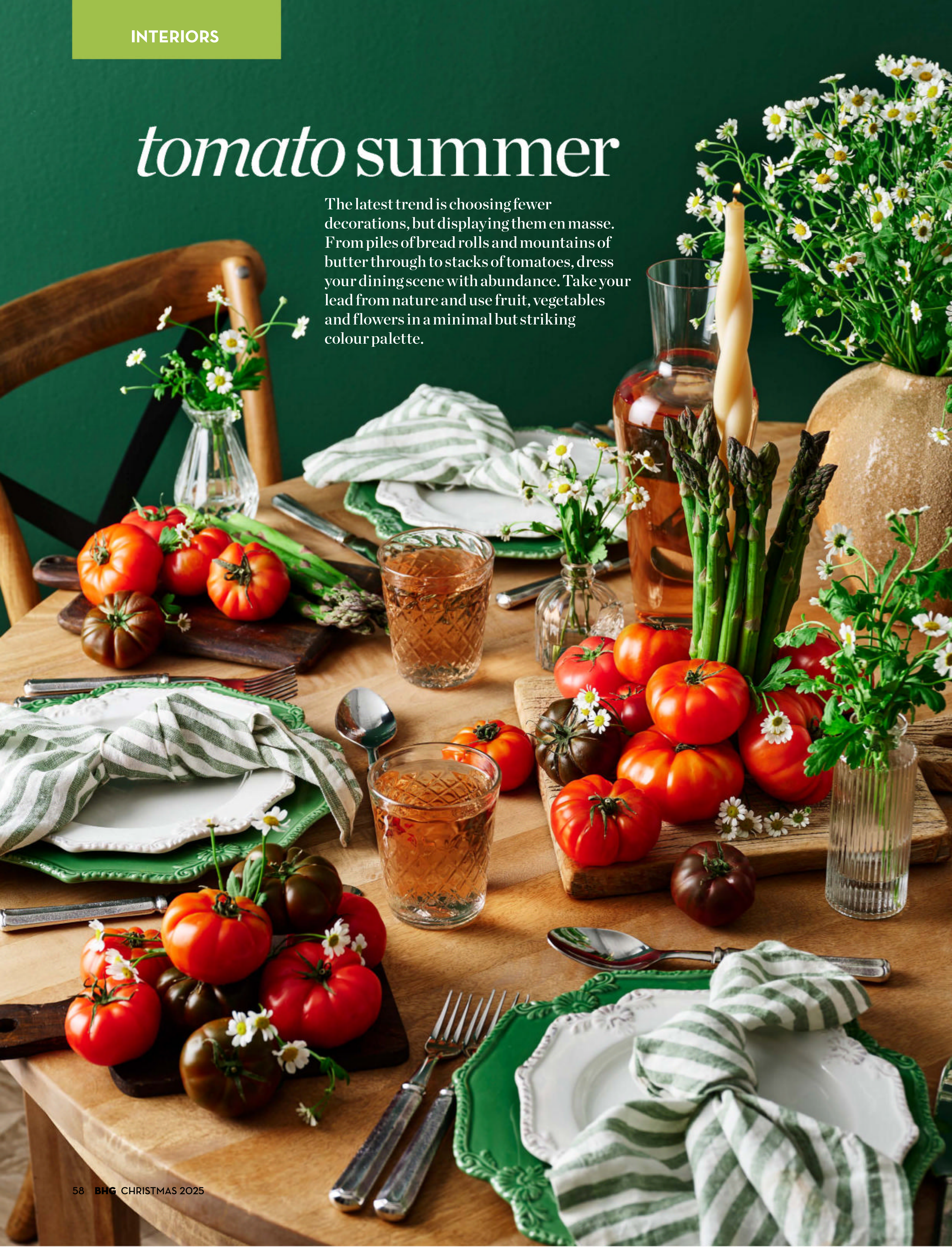
Farm to *tablescapes*

Elevate your entertaining style with an abundance of fresh produce and nature-inspired decor for your next special occasion.

Concept MEGAN OSBORNE *Styling and tips* NONCI NYONI *Photography* TIM ROBERTS

tomato summer

The latest trend is choosing fewer decorations, but displaying them en masse. From piles of bread rolls and mountains of butter through to stacks of tomatoes, dress your dining scene with abundance. Take your lead from nature and use fruit, vegetables and flowers in a minimal but striking colour palette.



TOP STYLING TIPS

1. Get inspired by nature

Stick to a nature-inspired palette in your dinnerware and decor. Try greens and browns, plus a touch of white for something fresh. Mix textures to create visual interest, such as different timbers, ceramics and vintage-look cutlery.

2. Think seasonally

In-season produce looks beautiful and sets the mood. Arrange an armful of your preferred vegetables – heirloom tomatoes and asparagus work well together – to bring bold colour and interesting shapes to the table.

3. Pick fresh flowers

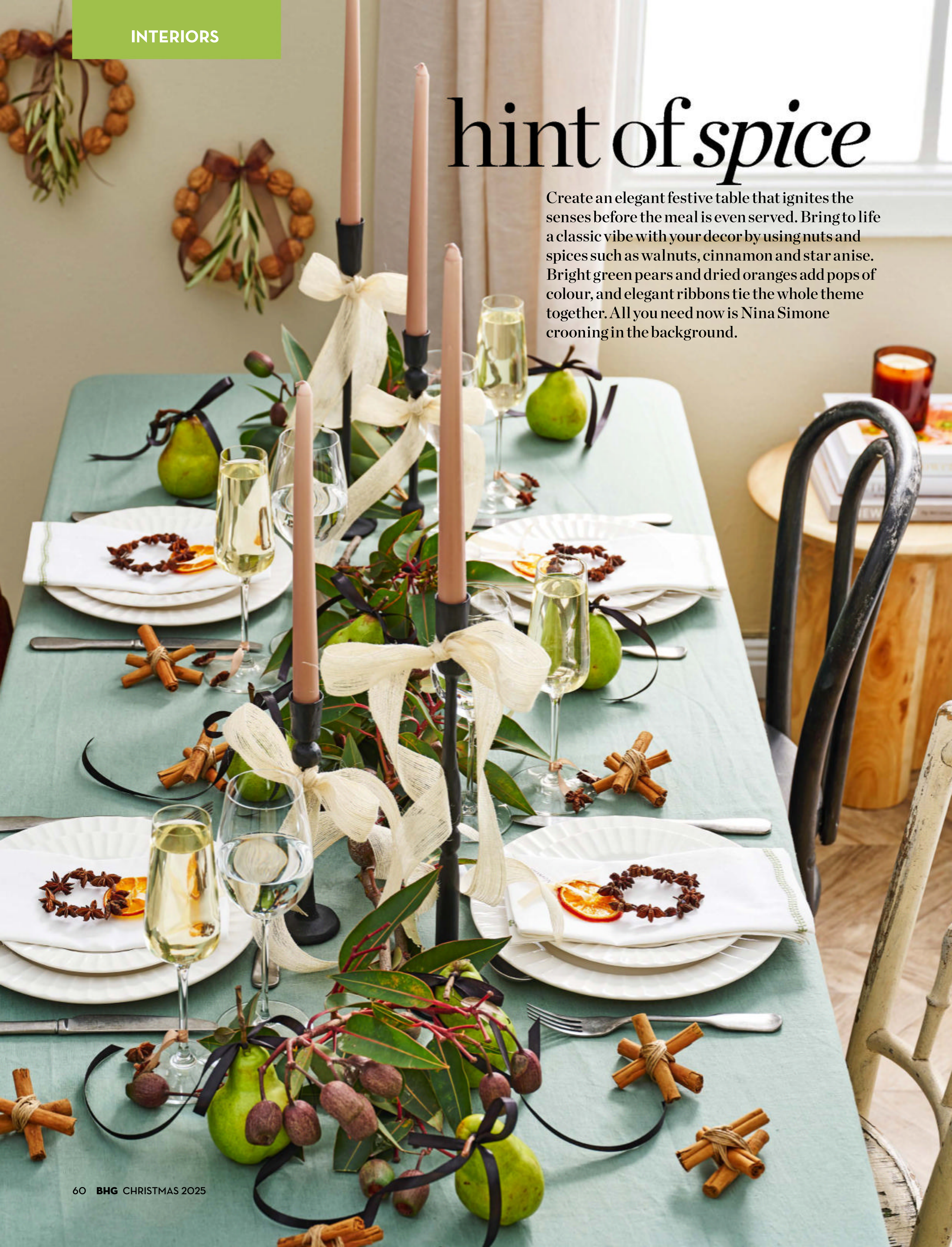
Decorate your table with a bundle of wildflowers. Pepper them among the vegetables and place them in mini bud vases to spread the florals around the table. You'll feel surrounded by nature.

Villa cafe **chair**, $280, from Provincial Home Living. Sorrento 120cm round **dining table**, $1099, from Oz Design Furniture. Bretagne **entree plate**, $15, and **dinner plate**, $22, from Provincial Home Living. French flax linen **napkins** in ivy stripe, $55 for four, from I Love Linen. Tivoli **cutlery set**, $269 for 20-piece set, from Pottery Barn. Balloton **tumblers**, $21 each, from Pepperwhites. Riedel Mosel **decanter,** $90. Glass bud **vases**, $38.99 for 12, from Amazon. Tarlo beeswax taper **candle**, $23, from Studio Billie. Hugo **vase**, $69, from Pepperwhites. Walls painted in Dulux Wash&Wear Low Sheen **paint** in Highland Green, $121.50 for 4 litres.

SHOP IT NOW
Scan this QR code
to shop the look.

hint of *spice*

Create an elegant festive table that ignites the senses before the meal is even served. Bring to life a classic vibe with your decor by using nuts and spices such as walnuts, cinnamon and star anise. Bright green pears and dried oranges add pops of colour, and elegant ribbons tie the whole theme together. All you need now is Nina Simone crooning in the background.



TOP STYLING TIPS

1. Fragrant finishes

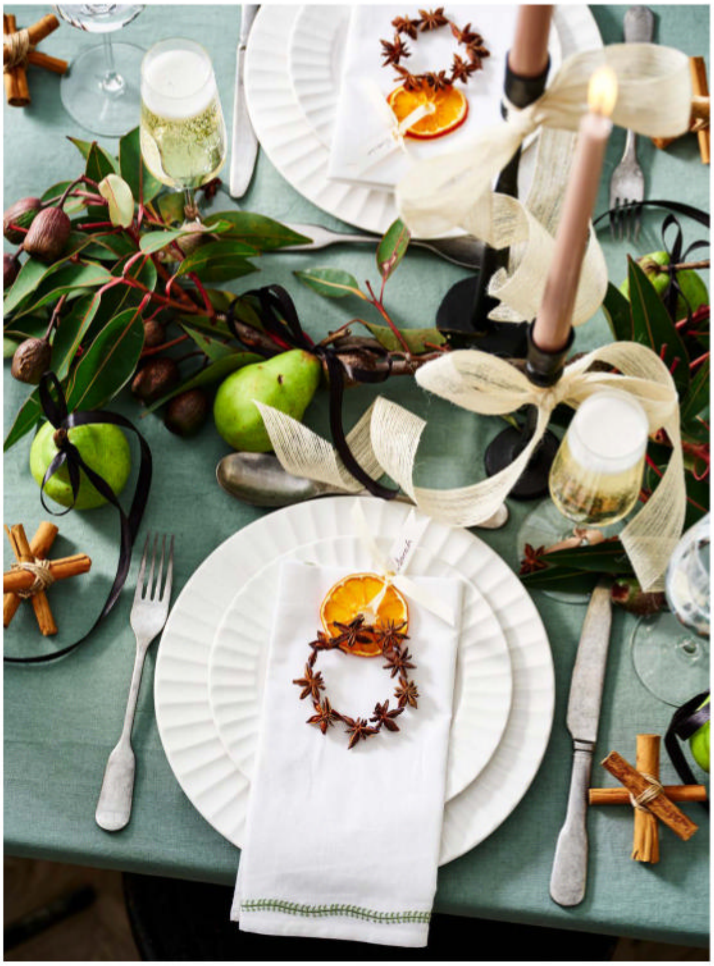
Decorate your table with everyday spices, fruits and nuts in a festive way. They look great and smell good, too.

2. Craft the look

Easy to make, tie cinnamon sticks with twine in a star shape. Make a decorative place card with dried orange slices and ribbon. Using a hot glue gun, create seasonal wreaths of star anise and mini whole walnuts. Tie ribbon around the pear stems, candlesticks, and anything else you want!

3. Level up

Use tall candles and candlesticks to create height on the table. Make a free-form runner with sprays of fresh eucalyptus laid along the centre of the table. Keeping the floral arrangement low allows for easy conversation.

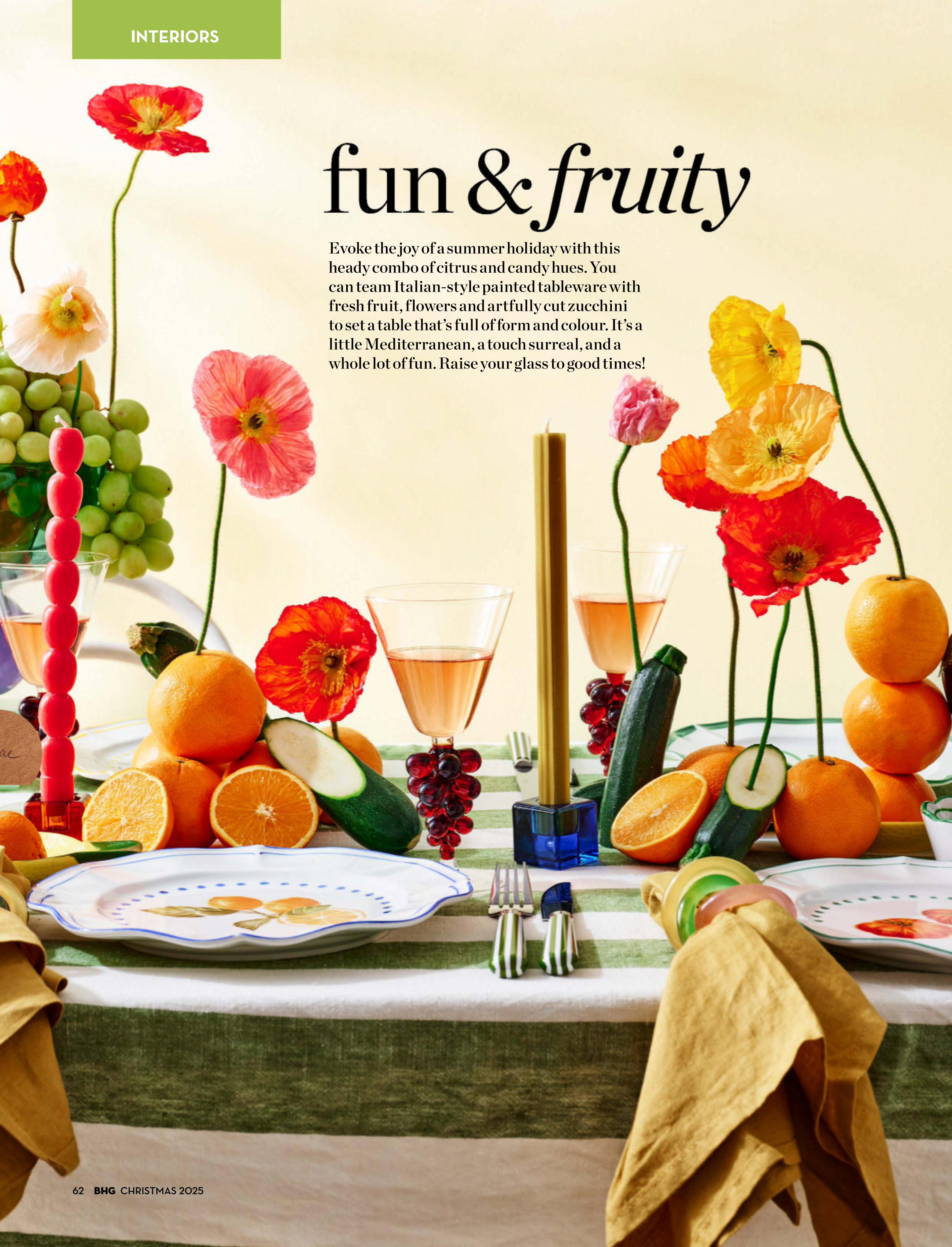


Linen **tablecloth** in green fig, from $130, from Carlotta and Gee. Anko Rim Embossed 12-piece **dinner set**, $29, from Target. Cotton **napkin** with embroidered border, $20 each, from Casa e Cucina. Fiddle **vintage cutlery**, three-piece set, $36, from Pepperwhites. Riedel Veritas **glassware** for riesling or zinfandel, $180 for four. Grape@Riedel **champagne flute**, $65 for two. Dimity **candlestick holders** in black, from $29.95, from Alfresco Emporium. Camilia Luna **candles** in mocha, $32 for 10, from Amazon. Vandoros cotton/linen **natural ribbon,** 38mm x 5 metres, $13.99, from Dymocks. BVIEAKD **black satin** ⅜ inch ribbon, $9.11 for 50 yards, from Amazon. **Curtain** in Messina fabric in linen colour, $99 per metre, from Warwick. Clover mango wood **side table**, $299.99, from Temple & Webster. Walls painted in Dulux Wash&Wear Low Sheen **paint** in Murray Valley, $102.91 for 4 litres. **Books and scented candle** stylist's own.

SCAN TO SHOP
Scan this QR code to shop the look.

fun & *fruity*

Evoke the joy of a summer holiday with this heady combo of citrus and candy hues. You can team Italian-style painted tableware with fresh fruit, flowers and artfully cut zucchini to set a table that's full of form and colour. It's a little Mediterranean, a touch surreal, and a whole lot of fun. Raise your glass to good times!



TOP STYLING TIPS

1. A bright idea

Incorporate vibrant florals with colourful fruit and veg to liven up your dining table. Here, poppies and sliced fruit and veg form sculptural and interesting shapes. The beauty of this kind of arrangement is a small amount of flowers goes a long way!

2. Create a work of art

Stack and balance layers of fruit and vegetables using skewers, toothpicks or wire to hold them together. Instead of a vase, use the fruit and vegetables as stem holders for the florals. Place cards planted with toothpicks in harder slices such as zucchini are fun, too!

3. Plate it up

Amplify the theme by using dinnerware and glassware decorated with fruit and vegetables for pops of playful colour.

Geo **bowl** in teal, $199, from Fazeek. Bordeaux **wine glasses** in clear and amber, $199 for two, from Maison Balzac. The Veggie Patch **candle** in cherry tomato and celery, $39 for four, from Maison Balzac. Le Cube **candle holder** in amber, $45 each, from Maison Balzac. Anko lemon **spoon rest**, $5, from Target. Capri 2.0 mixed **dinner plates set**, $149, from No.22 Home. Green-and-white stripe **16-piece cutlery** set, $120, from In The Round House. Le Cube **candle holder** in indigo, $45, from Maison Balzac. Moss stripe **tablecloth**, from $229, from Kip & Co. Linen **napkin set** in ochre, $55 for four, from Carlotta & Gee. Bejewelled trinity **napkin rings**, $55, from Kip & Co. The Season green bow **mini bowl**, $84, from No.22 Home. Walls painted in Porter's Paints Eggshell **paint** in Shimmer, $159.90 for 4 litres. ■

SHOP IT NOW
Scan this QR code
to shop the look.

better decorating

[THE LATEST PRODUCTS AND HOME INTERIOR TRENDS WITH JADA SUSAS.]

SCAN ME
Scan this QR code to shop these items.

SANDY GLOW

Give your home a natural touch with the Boyde table lamp, $299, from Domayne. The sturdy ceramic base and shade are in sandy hues that create a soft and lovely light.

Merry mornings

Wake up surrounded by Christmas magic with Adairs' ever-popular 12 Days of Christmas quilt cover set, from $149.99 (double). With whimsical illustrations based on the classic carol and a red stripe reverse, it's perfect for the festive season. You'll wake up full of Christmas spirit.

RETRO TROPICS

BIG W's latest tableware turns any party into a tropical carnival. Nostalgic art prints are served up on pastel plates, bringing a summery flair to mealtimes. Collect the Openook Festive dinner plate, side plates and platter to complete the look. Priced from $3.50 for a dinner plate at BIG W.

RED HOT

Left the party planning to the last minute? Grab a Sarah Urban chilli Christmas set, $259, and don't sweat it! The set includes an assortment of gorgeous chilli red candles, glass candle holders and bud vases, and a gluten-free Christmas recipe card set.

LOCKER LOVE

Spice up your storage with Mustard Made's colourful range. From metal lockers to glass-fronted cabinets and floating shelves, they're a maximalist's dream. We love the Midi in blush, $499. Use it as a toy cupboard, dining buffet or drinks cabinet. ■

Prices are approximate and a guide only.

HARVEY NORMAN® PRESENTS

Season of Christmas

Create effortless celebrations this Christmas with a complete collection of appliances, designed for delicious festive entertaining.

Season's eatings

Fig, berry and golden caramel meringue wreath; white chocolate and ginger star cookies; pink gin and rhubarb cocktail.

harveynorman.com.au/recipes for the full recipe

KitchenAid Artisan® Tilt-Head Stand Mixer in Juniper, 5KSM195, $949.
Built to last, designed to impress.

Harvey Norman®

HARVEYNORMAN.COM.AU
online | mobile | in store

Twice the cheer

Stacked dual basket innovation

Cook mains and sides simultaneously with independent temperature and time controls across two stacked dual baskets. From juicy vegetables up top to succulent roasts below, everything's ready to serve together, perfectly cooked.

Customisable cooking space

Boasting a clever vertical layout, this air fryer gives you the capacity of two baskets while taking up nearly half the bench space of a traditional side-by-side design. And it still comes with the built-in flexibility of six preset options and 12 different ways to cook.

200
20
PHILIPS

SyncFinish for expert timing

Philips' RapidAir technology circulates heat evenly for crisp, golden results with up to 90 per cent less fat than deep frying. SyncFinish ensures both baskets complete their cook at the same time, taking the guesswork out of juggling festive dishes. Throw in handy presets, a convenient viewing window, automatic shake reminders and easy-clean, dishwasher safe baskets, and you've got stress-free timing for every Christmas feast.

Philips 4000 Series Stacked Dual Basket Air Fryer, NA462/70, $449.
Cook two dishes at once with stacked baskets, smart tech and a compact design.

Harvey Norman®

HARVEYNORMAN.COM.AU
online | mobile | in store

180
200
PHILIPS
RapidAir Technology

Season's eatings

Honey candied carrots; gruyère and sweet potato stacks; roasted asparagus with lemon butter and chives; rosè and white nectarine sangria.

harveynorman.com.au/recipes for the full recipe

19:20
RICHMOND
belling

Season's eatings

Turkey breast stuffed with sage and pancetta; cranberry glazed ham; duck fat potatoes; crispy parmesan brussels sprouts; grilled lobster tails; whole roast jewel pumpkin; Bellini.

harveynorman.com.au/recipes for the full recipe

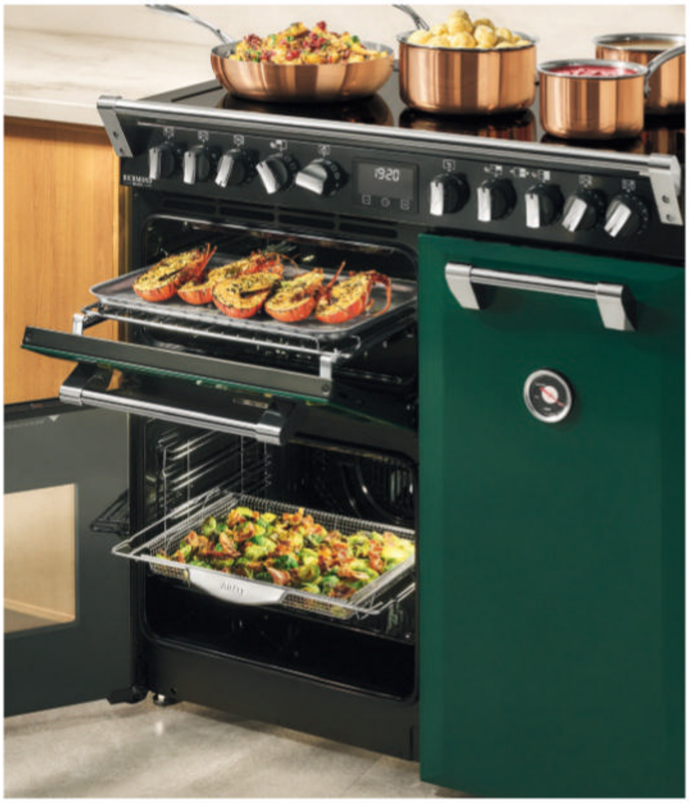
Space for the season

Timeless luxury design

With its elegant farmhouse-inspired look and deep racing green finish, the Colour Boutique Richmond Deluxe 90cm Induction Range Cooker brings a sense of occasion to your kitchen. Classic styling meets advanced cooking technology, creating a durable, high-performing centrepiece built for family feasts and festive entertaining.

Powerful induction cooktop

Enjoy fast, precise meal-prep on a five-zone induction cooktop designed for everyday convenience. Flexible bridgeable zones handle larger pans with ease, while handy presets, auto heat-up and a built-in timer keep everything on track.



Enhanced cooking flexibility

With three spacious ovens and 18 versatile functions (including Air Fry and Steam Assist), this range makes it easy to serve up multiple dishes at once. The clever PROFLEX™ Splitter transforms the tall oven into two independent cooking zones, perfect for juggling sides, mains and desserts. Whether you're preparing Christmas dinner or weeknight meals, enjoy flexibility and consistently impressive results.

Belling Colour Boutique Richmond Deluxe 90cm Induction Range Cooker in British Racing Green, BRDX90INDBRG, $8999.
A statement range cooker that blends timeless design with modern features.

Harvey Norman®

HARVEYNORMAN.COM.AU
online | mobile | in store

Celebrations made effortless

Easy weigh scales and cleaning

Built-in digital scales let you measure ingredients directly into the bowl or on the tray, with no extra gadgets. Afterwards, the clean preset and dishwasher-safe parts make holiday clean-up a breeze.

Intuitive OneTouch™ Presets

Six smart presets take all the guesswork out of your prep work. Chop, mince, puree, dough, blend and ice crush are all done with a single tap. It's the perfect kitchen assistant for those times when you want to juggle sides, sauces and sweets with ease.

Express Serve™ Slicing

Slice and grate directly into your serving dish, pan or storage container with the clever Express Serve™ attachment. With a reversible 4mm slicing and grating disc, the Express Serve™ comes with an extension that makes it suitable to use with a wide range of pots, platters or jars. Prepare salads and layered dishes, or grate entire blocks of cheese in moments with this super-efficient feature.

Kenwood MultiPro OneTouch™ Food Processor, FDM73480SS, $399.
From weighing to slicing, enjoy effortless, all-in-one prep with smart presets.

Harvey Norman®

HARVEYNORMAN.COM.AU
online | mobile | in store

KENWOOD
MULTIPRO ONETOUCH
00:13
Dough
Puree
Mix
Custom
High
Med
Low
Ice Crush
Blend
Clean
zero
kg lb
Pulse

Season's eatings

Zucchini and pea tarts with seared scallops; beet, radish, and blood orange salad with white bean puree; paired with a crisp Chardonnay.

harveynorman.com.au/recipes for the full recipe

Hisense
Hisense
Hisense

Season's eatings

Jewelled panna cotta with rose petals and pistachios; pink gin French 75; spiced pear mule, complete with Christmas wine pairings.

harveynorman.com.au/recipes for the full recipe

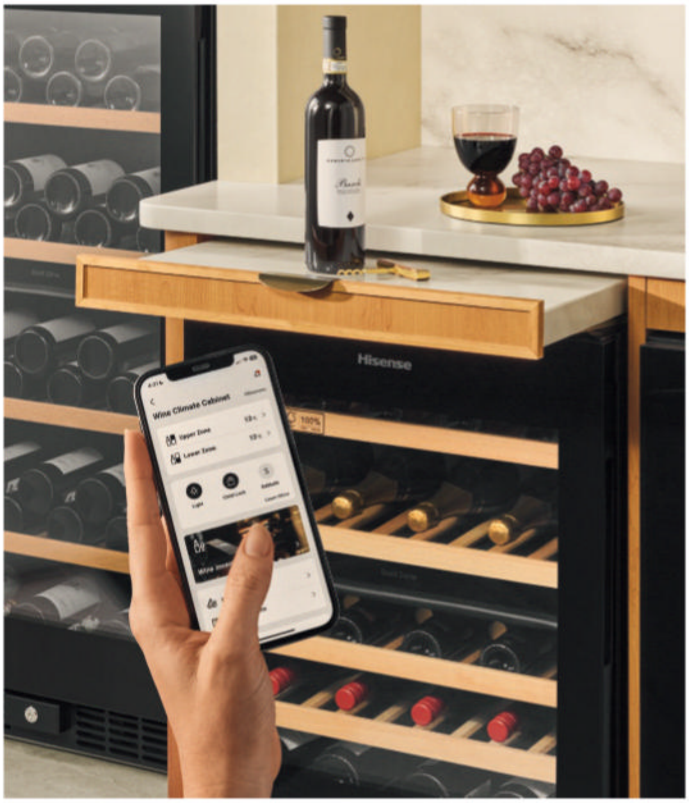
Uncork the moment

Dual temperature zones

Keep reds and whites at their best with independent zones. Whether it's the tall 108-bottle cellar for serious collectors, the 46-bottle option for compact spaces or the 140-can beverage cooler, you'll always have the right drink at the right temperature.

Tri-glazed UV protection

Protect your collection from both light and heat with these cutting-edge, triple-layered glass doors. Designed to block harmful UV rays while maintaining a stable climate, they ensure your wines mature gracefully and your chilled drinks stay crisp and refreshing.



Smart Wi-Fi connectivity

Take the guesswork out of storing and serving drinks with built-in Wi-Fi control via the Hisense ConnectLife app*. From your phone, you can check and adjust temperatures, switch between modes and even receive alerts if the door is left open. In addition, the Wine Library feature means you can scan your wine labels to discover tasting notes, the history of each vintage and even more useful information.

Hisense 108 Bottle Black Glass Wine Cabinet, HRWC108B, $1999.

Hisense 46 Bottle Wine Cellar, HRWC46B, $1499.

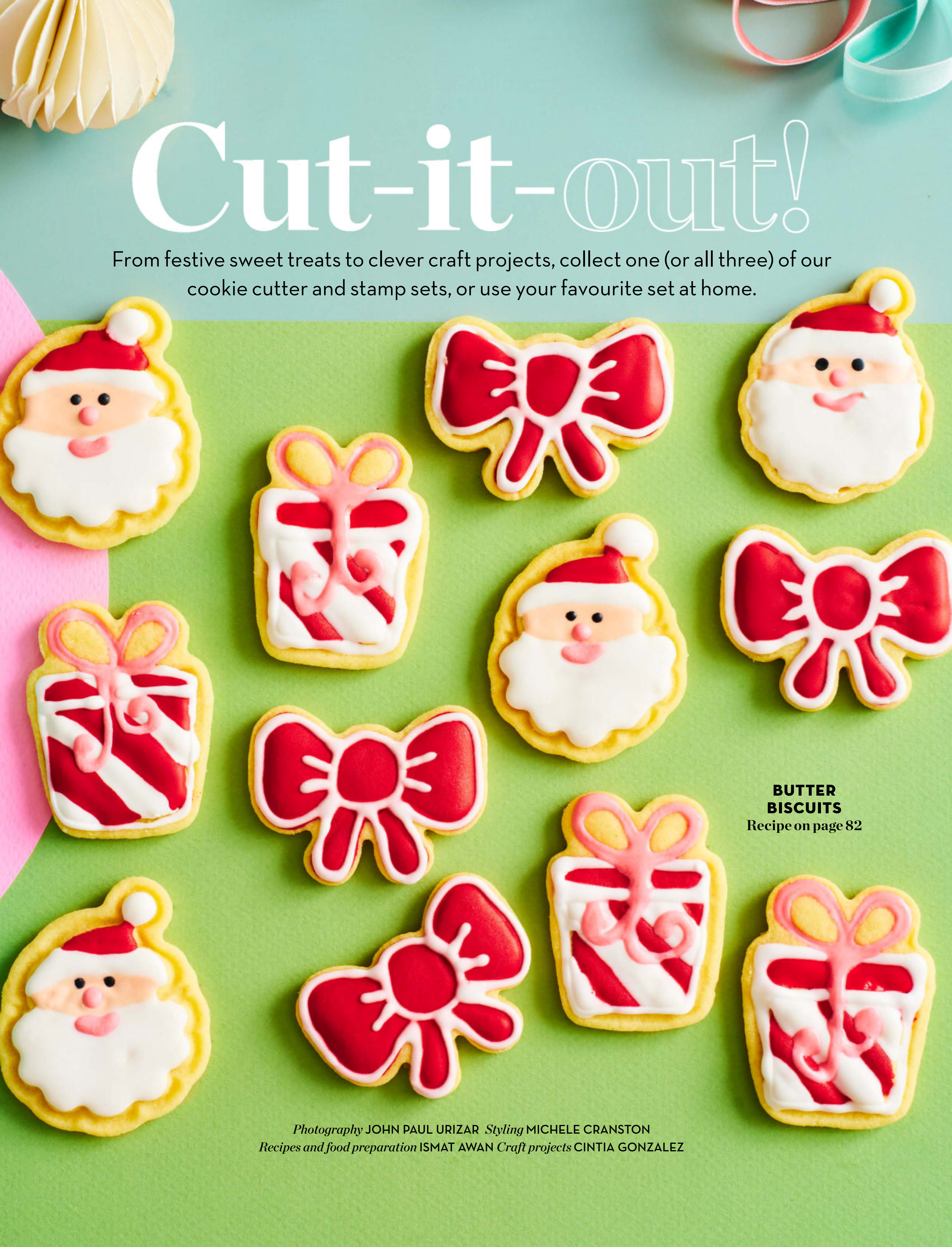
Hisense 140 Can Beverage Cooler HRBC137, $1399.

Harvey Norman®

HARVEYNORMAN.COM.AU
online | mobile | in store

SHOP ONLINE WITH **YOUR LOCAL** STORE **HN.COM.AU** OR CALL **1300 464 278**

Each Harvey Norman® store is operated by an independent franchisee. Accessories shown are not included. Promotion ends 23/12/2025.
*App must be downloaded. Subscription charges may apply. Internet connection required. Data charges may apply.



Cut-it-out!

From festive sweet treats to clever craft projects, collect one (or all three) of our cookie cutter and stamp sets, or use your favourite set at home.

BUTTER BISCUITS
Recipe on page 82

Photography JOHN PAUL URIZAR *Styling* MICHELE CRANSTON
Recipes and food preparation ISMAT AWAN *Craft projects* CINTIA GONZALEZ

PISTACHIO BISCUITS WITH WHITE CHOC GANACHE

Recipe on page 83

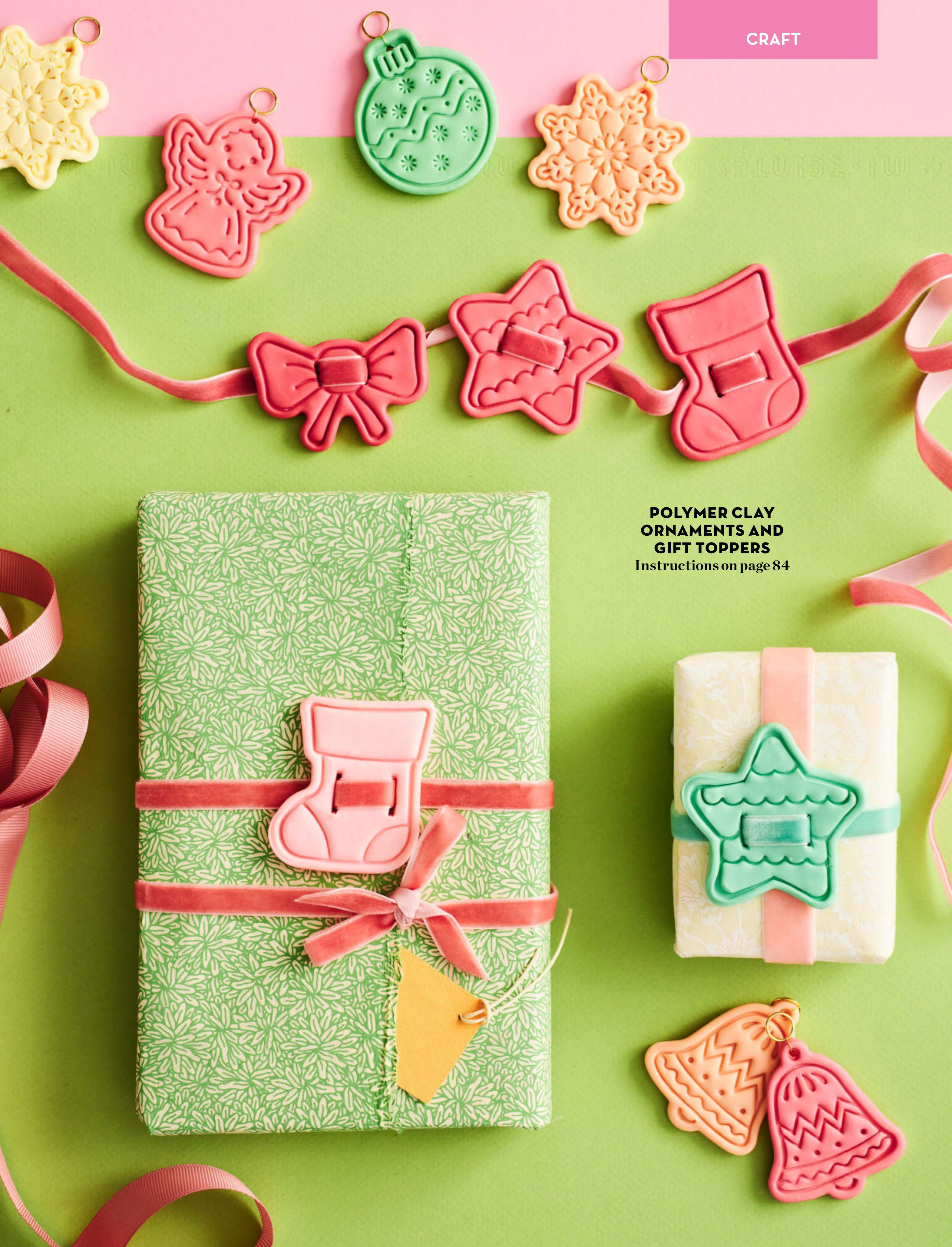
SPECULOOS SPICED COOKIES

Recipe on page 82

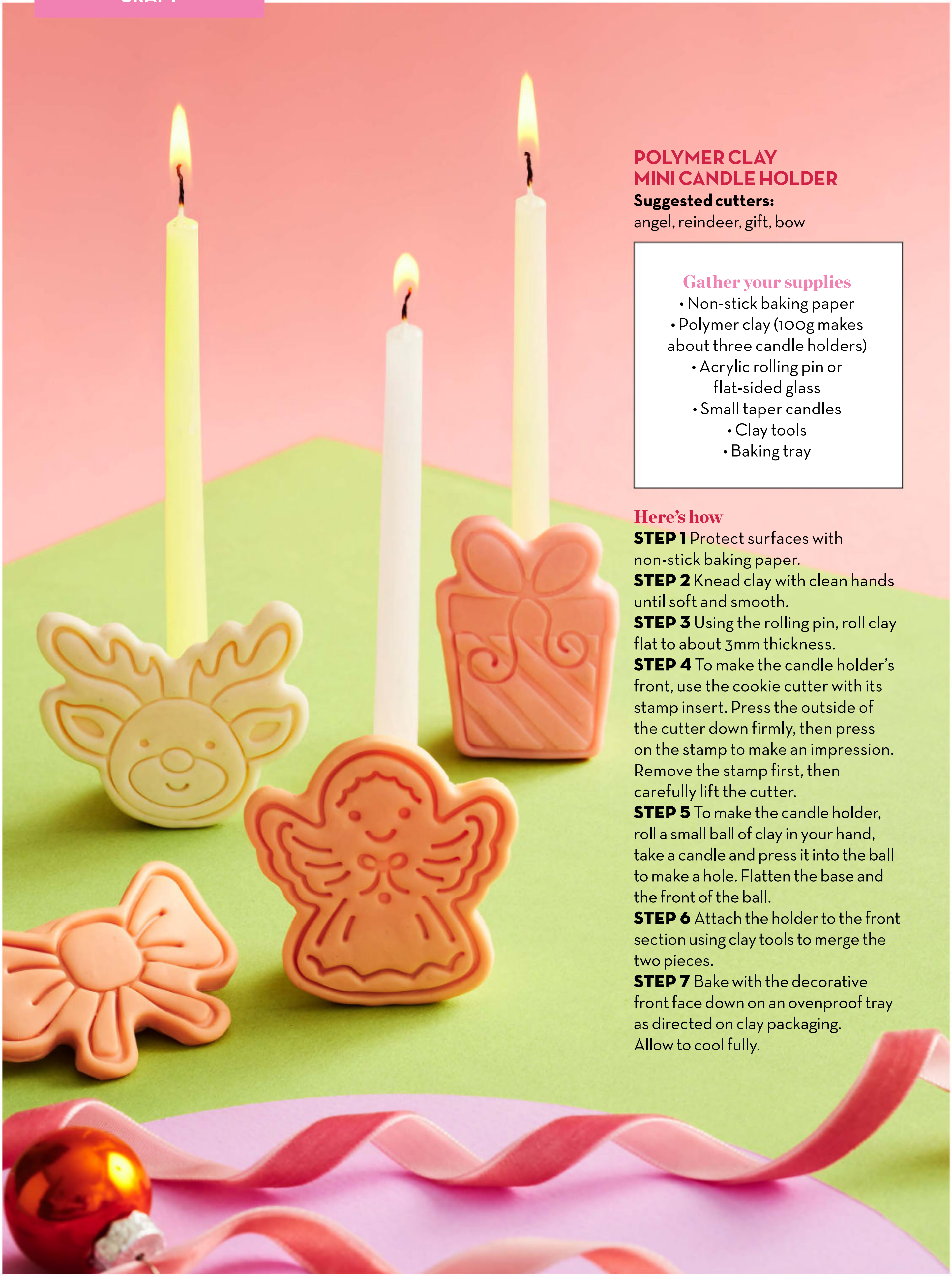
NEAPOLITAN ICE-CREAM SANDWICHES
Recipe on page 82

TEA LIGHT CANDLES

Instructions on page 84



POLYMER CLAY ORNAMENTS AND GIFT TOPPERS
Instructions on page 84



POLYMER CLAY MINI CANDLE HOLDER

Suggested cutters:
angel, reindeer, gift, bow

Gather your supplies

- Non-stick baking paper
- Polymer clay (100g makes about three candle holders)
- Acrylic rolling pin or flat-sided glass
- Small taper candles
- Clay tools
- Baking tray

Here's how

STEP 1 Protect surfaces with non-stick baking paper.

STEP 2 Knead clay with clean hands until soft and smooth.

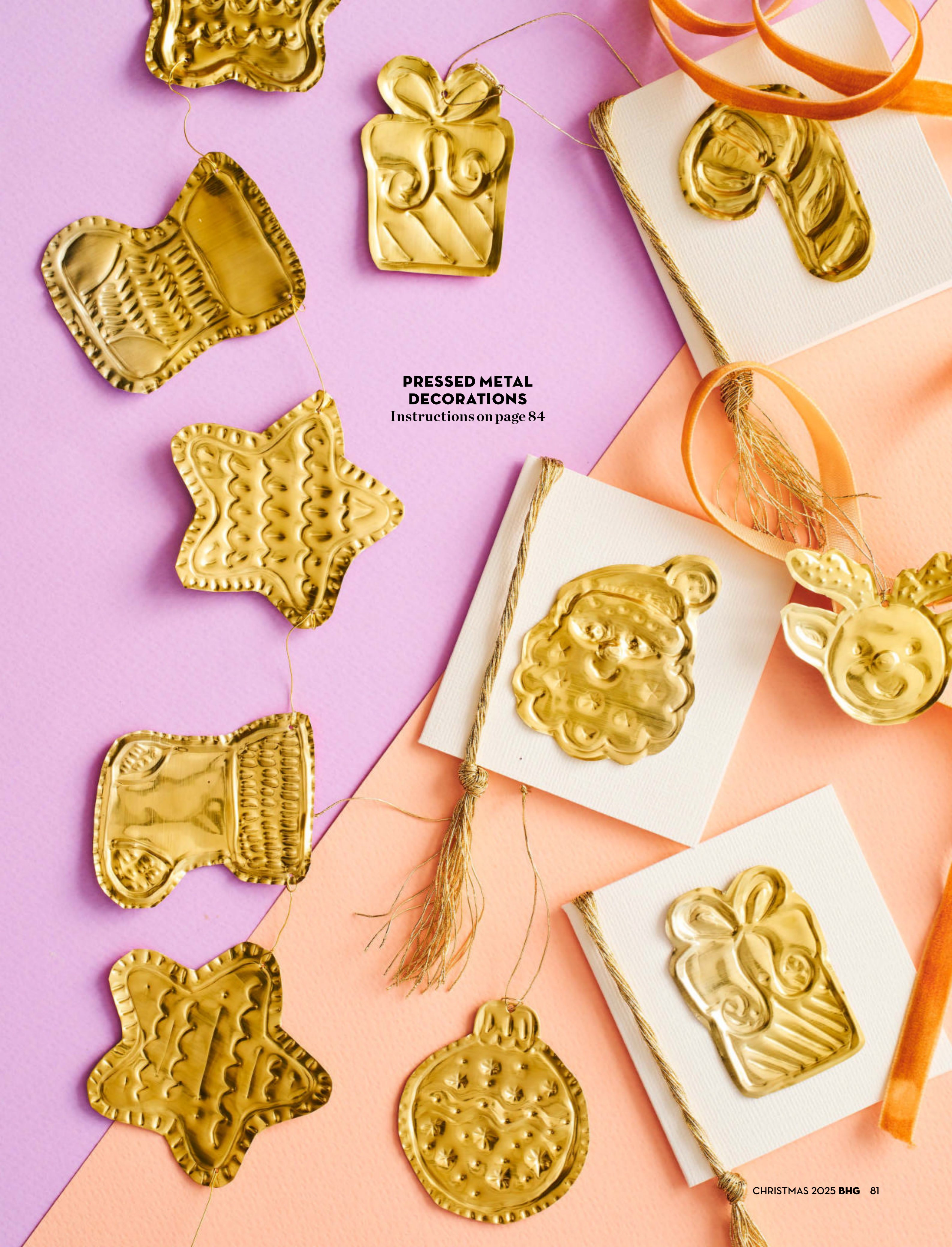
STEP 3 Using the rolling pin, roll clay flat to about 3mm thickness.

STEP 4 To make the candle holder's front, use the cookie cutter with its stamp insert. Press the outside of the cutter down firmly, then press on the stamp to make an impression. Remove the stamp first, then carefully lift the cutter.

STEP 5 To make the candle holder, roll a small ball of clay in your hand, take a candle and press it into the ball to make a hole. Flatten the base and the front of the ball.

STEP 6 Attach the holder to the front section using clay tools to merge the two pieces.

STEP 7 Bake with the decorative front face down on an ovenproof tray as directed on clay packaging. Allow to cool fully.



PRESSED METAL DECORATIONS

Instructions on page 84

BUTTER BISCUITS

Preparation time 20 mins plus 30 mins chilling
Cooking time 25–30 mins
Makes 40

125g unsalted butter, softened
½ cup caster sugar
1 large free-range egg yolk
½ teaspoon vanilla extract
1⅓ cups plain flour, plus extra for dusting
½ teaspoon baking powder
Pinch of salt

ROYAL ICING

1 free-range egg white
1½ cups pure icing sugar, sifted
½ teaspoon lemon juice
Red, pale pink, peach and black gel food colouring

STEP 1 In the mixing bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment, beat butter and sugar for 2–3 minutes, until pale and fluffy. Add egg yolk and vanilla, then beat until combined.
STEP 2 In a separate bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder and salt. Gradually add to butter mixture, mixing on low speed until dough forms.
STEP 3 Divide into two discs, wrap in plastic wrap, then chill for 30 minutes.
STEP 4 Preheat oven to 190°C/170°C fan-forced. Line trays with baking paper. On a lightly floured surface, roll out dough to a 5mm thickness. Lightly dust cookie cutters and stamps with extra flour. Cut dough into shapes with cutter, then press stamp in firmly, dusting cutter and stamp with extra flour each time.
STEP 5 Transfer to trays, then bake for 12–14 minutes, until edges are pale golden. Leave to cool on the trays. Biscuits can be served as-is or decorated with icing, as follows.
STEP 6 For royal icing, whisk egg white in a bowl until foamy. Gradually add icing sugar, stirring with a wooden spoon to combine. Add lemon juice and stir. Add a little extra lemon juice if needed to loosen. Transfer 2 teaspoons mixture to a bowl and tint black. Transfer 2 tablespoons mixture to a small bowl and tint pale pink. Transfer 2 tablespoons mixture to another small bowl and tint pale peach (for skin colour). Transfer half remaining mixture to a bowl and tint red. Keep remaining mixture white. Transfer icings to small snaplock bags and snip edges.
STEP 7 Using the imprints on the biscuits as a guide, decorate biscuits with icing, allowing each colour to set completely before adding another colour onto the biscuit. Let them cool completely at room temperature to set.

NEAPOLITAN ICE-CREAM SANDWICHES

Makes 25 sandwiches
Preparation time 40 mins plus 4 hours freezing
Cooking time 20–25 mins

2L store-bought Neapolitan ice cream
100g unsalted butter, softened
⅓ cup caster sugar
1 free-range egg yolk
½ teaspoon vanilla extract
1 cup plain flour, plus extra to dust
2 tablespoons Dutch-process cocoa powder
½ teaspoon bicarbonate soda
Pinch of salt

STEP 1 Line a 20cm x 30cm x 3cm lamington pan with two layers of plastic wrap. Dollop scoops of ice cream in the pan, overlapping colours. Using the back of a spoon, lightly press down on the ice cream to compact and flatten it. Cover pan with plastic wrap. Freeze the ice cream for 4 hours or overnight, until firm.
STEP 2 Preheat oven to 170°C/150°C fan-forced. Line two baking trays with baking paper.
STEP 3 In a large bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment, beat butter and sugar 2–3 minutes, until pale and fluffy. Beat in egg yolk and vanilla.
STEP 3 Sift flour, cocoa, bicarbonate soda and salt in a bowl. In two batches, stir flour mixture into butter mixture until combined. Shape into a disc, wrap in plastic wrap and chill for 30 minutes.
STEP 4 Roll dough between two lightly floured sheets of baking paper to 5mm thick. Lightly dust cookie cutters and stamp with extra flour. Cut dough into shapes with cutter, then press the stamp in firmly, dusting the cutter and stamp with extra flour each time (you may need to use a toothpick to remove any dough caught in the stamp). Chill cutouts for 15 minutes.
STEP 5 Bake 10 minutes, then set aside to cool completely.
STEP 6 Use a cookie cutter to cut out 25 ice-cream shapes, then cover with plastic wrap and freeze until firm.
STEP 7 Sandwich ice cream between biscuits. Freeze until ready to serve.

COOK'S TIP

Run the back of a hot, dry spoon over the ice-cream cutouts before sandwiching and refreezing. This helps the biscuits stick to the ice cream.

SPECULOOS SPICED COOKIES

Makes 36
Preparation time 20 mins, plus 30 mins chilling
Cooking time 20–25 mins

125g unsalted butter, softened
¼ cup brown sugar
1 free-range egg yolk
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1¼ cups plain flour
½ teaspoon cinnamon
½ teaspoon mixed spice

½ teaspoon ground nutmeg
¼ teaspoon ground ginger
Pinch of salt

GLAZE
Pinch of instant coffee powder
1 tablespoon boiling water
⅓ cup pure icing sugar

STEP 1 In a small bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment, beat butter and sugar for 2–3 minutes, until fluffy. Beat in egg yolk and vanilla.
STEP 2 In a separate bowl, sift together flour, spices and salt. Stir into butter mixture until a dough forms. Shape into a disc, wrap in plastic wrap and chill for 30 minutes.
STEP 3 Preheat oven to 190°C/170°C fan-forced. Line two baking trays with baking paper.
STEP 4 Roll dough between two sheets of baking paper to 5mm thick. Lightly dust cookie cutters and stamps with extra flour. Cut dough in shapes with cutter, then press the stamp in firmly, dusting the cutter and stamp with extra flour each time. Transfer to trays.
STEP 5 Bake 10–12 minutes or until golden. Cool for 10 minutes on tray, then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.
STEP 6 For the glaze, dissolve coffee powder in water in a small bowl. Stir in icing sugar to create a pourable consistency. Lightly brush icing over cooled cookies. Set aside to dry.

COOK'S TIP

The glaze is very thin to allow the biscuit imprint to still be visible once the glaze is added. Adding the glaze is optional – the biscuits are delicious with or without.

PISTACHIO BISCUITS WITH WHITE CHOC GANACHE

Preparation time 25 mins plus 30 mins chilling
Cooking time 50 mins
Makes 20 sandwiches

125g unsalted butter, softened
¼ cup caster sugar
1 free-range egg yolk
1 cup plus 2 tablespoons plain flour
¼ teaspoon baking powder
Pinch of salt
¼ cup pistachios, very finely chopped

WHITE CHOCOLATE PISTACHIO GANACHE
100g white chocolate, chopped
2 tablespoons thickened cream
2 tablespoons pistachio spread

STEP 1 In a bowl of a stand mixer using a paddle attachment, beat butter and sugar for 3–5 minutes, until pale and fluffy. Add egg yolk, beat well.
STEP 2 In a bowl, combine the flour, baking powder, salt and pistachios. Stir into butter mixture until combined. Shape into a disc, cover in plastic wrap and chill for 30 minutes.
STEP 3 Preheat oven to 170°C/150°C fan-forced. Line two baking trays with baking paper.
STEP 4 Roll dough between two sheets of baking paper to 5mm thick. Lightly dust cookie cutters and stamp with extra flour. Cut dough into shapes with cutter, then press stamp in firmly, dusting cutter and stamp with extra flour each time. Arrange on trays.
STEP 5 Bake 10–12 minutes or until lightly golden at edges. Leave to cool completely on trays.
STEP 6 For ganache, place chocolate and cream in a small saucepan on low heat. Stir until melted and smooth. Remove from heat. Stir in pistachio spread. Transfer to a bowl, then set aside for 5–10 minutes to cool until thick enough to spread (don't refrigerate as it will set too firm to pipe).
STEP 7 Transfer ganache to a piping bag fitted with a small fluted nozzle. Pipe ganache over a non-imprint side of the biscuit. Sandwich, imprint side up, with another biscuit.

COOK'S TIP

If you want to make the ganache ahead, store it, covered, in the fridge. Remove from the fridge 1 hour before using to soften it for piping.

TEA LIGHT CANDLES

Suggested cutters:
star, tree, stocking, bell

Gather your supplies

- Small, flat-bottomed baking tray
- Blu Tack or plasticine
- Candle-making soy wax flakes
- Microwave-safe container
- Candle wax dye (optional)
- Candle wicks with metal base
- Scissors

Here's how

STEP 1 To make moulds, place outer shape of cutters onto baking tray. Seal around the bottom of the cutters with some Blu Tack or plasticine. Make sure there are no gaps where the melted wax can run out.

STEP 2 Melt wax with a microwave or double boiler as instructed on the packaging. You can add wax dye at this stage, if desired.

STEP3 Pour a small amount (about ½ teaspoon) of wax into each mould and stick the wick base down. Ensure the wick is centred. Allow to set.

STEP 4 Once the wick is firmly set, top up with melted wax.

STEP 5 Allow the wax to cool and harden overnight or place in the freezer for 1 hour to firm up.

STEP 6 When wax is fully hardened, remove mould from baking tray and gently push candle out of cutter shape.

STEP 7 Trim wick to about 1cm.

PRESSED METAL DECORATIONS

Suggested cutters: all are suitable (only the inside stamp is needed)

Gather your supplies

- Empty tomato paste tubes (we used Mutti brand)
- Metal spoon
- Felt sheet (or soft surface)
- Ball-tipped scoring tool – you can also use an empty ballpoint pen or blunt tapestry needle
- Scissors
- Fine wire or ribbon

Here's how

STEP 1 Carefully cut open tomato paste tube. Wash and allow to dry.

STEP 2 If required, flatten out any wrinkles with the back of a metal spoon to smooth the foil.

STEP 3 Place the foil, gold side up, onto a piece of felt or soft surface. Firmly press the stamp design of the cookie cutter into the foil to imprint the design outline.

STEP 4 Using a blunt-tipped scoring tool, trace the design outline, adding extra embellishments as desired. You can trace from the front and back of the foil to create interesting textures.

STEP 5 Cut out finished design with scissors.

STEP 6 To make the hanging ornaments or a garland, punch a small hole and thread with ribbon or wire.

CRAFT TIP

These pressed metal decorations make lovely decorative additions to greeting cards or gift tags. Just attach with double-sided tape and add a festive message.

POLYMER CLAY ORNAMENTS AND GIFT TOPPERS

Suggested cutters: all are suitable

Gather your supplies

- Non-stick baking paper
- Polymer clay (100g makes 3–4 ornaments)
- Acrylic rolling pin or flat-sided glass
- Clay tools
- Baking tray
- Wire and/or jump rings (and jewellery pliers)
- Velvet ribbon (or ribbon of your choice)
- Scissors

Here's how

STEP 1 Protect surfaces with non-stick baking paper.

STEP 2 Knead clay with clean hands until soft and smooth.

STEP 3 Roll clay flat to 3mm thick.

STEP 4 Press the outside of the cutter down firmly, then press on the stamp to make an impression. Remove the stamp first, then lift the cutter.

STEP 5 For a hanging ornament, make a small hole in top of the clay design.

STEP 6 For a gift topper, cut two small parallel slits the width of the ribbon about 1.5cm apart.

STEP 7 Bake on an ovenproof tray as directed on packaging and cool fully.

STEP 8 For an ornament, add a jump ring or wire loop to the hole. Add ribbon.

STEP 9 For a gift topper, thread the ribbon through the slits, then wrap around the gift.

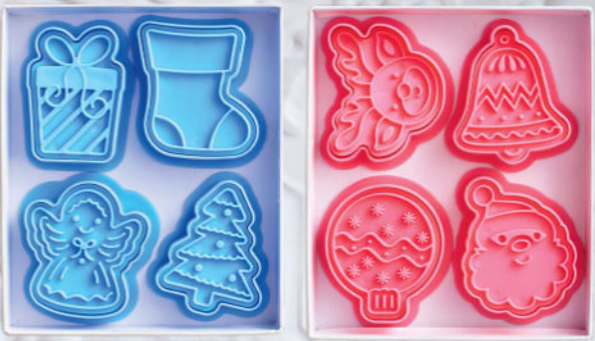
CRAFT TIP

To thread the hanging ornaments directly with ribbon, you'll need to make a larger hole before baking. ■

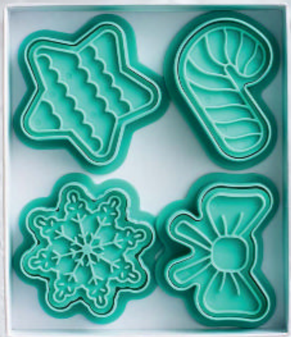
Make merry this Christmas

Collect all three cookie cutter sets!

There are three BHG cookie cutter and stamp sets to collect this year, perfect for seasonal baking and crafty fun. You'll find the blue or pink packs with our Christmas issue in newsagents, and the green pack with BHG in supermarkets. Get together with your friends and family to complete the whole festive set. Share, swap and collect them all!



Collect our blue and pink packs from participating newsagents



Collect our green pack from supermarkets

COLIN'S GRILLED PEACH AND HAM SALAD
Recipe on page 90

Cooking
with Colin & Clarissa

Make fresh festive fare, plus we chat with Clarissa for her go-to recipes.

Photography TIM ROBERTS *Styling* MICHELE CRANSTON

SEEN ON BHG TV
FRIDAYS 7.00

COLIN'S MANGO AND VERMICELLI CHICKEN SALAD

Recipe on page 90

COLIN FASSNIDGE AND CLARISSA FEILDEL
Join us as we show you how to make delicious dishes on BHG TV, Fridays at 7pm on Channel 7. For more recipes, go to **BHG.COM.AU**

BHG TV presenter Clarissa Feildel is a self-taught cook with a diverse repertoire, thanks to growing up in Malaysia and her Nyonya/Chinese and Sri Lankan background. She has embarked on several foodie adventures with her husband Manu Feildel, from penning a cookbook to managing an event space. We chatted with her about her approach to Christmas and family cooking.

Portrait photography Jeremy Greive

BHG: What does Christmas with the Feildels look like?
CF: It's a mishmash of everything. The Christmas before last we had Colin [Fassnidge] over and he made the ham. I made curry and roti. Manu made salmon and pork. Our neighbours let us use their backyard in exchange for food.

BHG: Sounds like a lot of food! What do you do with the leftovers?
CF: We spend the next week using it all up in various ways. When you buy a big leg of ham, often after Christmas it still looks like you only made a small dent in it. So I make fried rice, and pasta with ham in it. And then Manu makes a really mean lentil soup with ham using the bone to make the stock. Nothing goes to waste.

BHG: Do you have any time-saving hacks for Christmas?
CF: Choose dishes that you can make the day before. There are so many dishes that you can make, put in the fridge and then assemble on the day.

I think there should only be two dishes that you make on the day, because you want to entertain your guests as well. You don't want to be in the kitchen while everyone's sitting down and enjoying themselves.

For instance, you can make and marinate skewered kebabs for the barbecue the day before. Your salads can be cut, then put in different containers in the fridge. Your salad dressing can be made the day before. All you need to do is chuck it in a big bowl and mix it up. You can make your sweets the day before, too; most cakes keep for a few days.

BHG: What family traditions or recipes do you bring to family dinnertime in your house?
CF: A quick stir-fry. Everyone's working, the kids have after-school activities, and by the time we get home it's about 6pm. We just want to do something quick. And just because it's quick and easy, it doesn't mean it doesn't taste good. There are so many stir-fries, you can change ingredients and seasoning to make it different. It can be a one-pot wonder or with noodles or rice on the side.

The three main ingredients I always use are oyster sauce, soy sauce and sesame oil. They really elevate the dish and add an umami taste to all of it. Then you can add lemongrass or different herbs to change the flavour. It's a crowd pleaser.

CLARISSA'S CHRISTMAS DESSERT BOARD

Recipe on page 90

COLIN'S MANGO AND VERMICELLI CHICKEN SALAD

Preparation time 30 mins
Cooking time 10 mins
Serves 4

200g vermicelli rice noodles
Olive oil
Sea-salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper, to season
550g chicken tenderloins
2 lebanese cucumbers, sliced or chopped
250g cherry tomatoes, halved or chopped
2 medium red chillies, finely sliced (optional)
2 Kensington Pride mangoes, julienned or chopped
½ bunch mint leaves, chopped
½ bunch basil leaves, chopped
½ bunch coriander leaves and stem, chopped
Chopped seaweed snack and salted peanuts, to garnish

DRESSING

1 tablespoon caster sugar
2 tablespoons water
6 tablespoons white vinegar
¼ cup fish sauce
1 birdseye or medium red chilli, finely chopped
1 clove garlic, finely chopped
Juice of 2 limes

STEP 1 For the dressing, shake all ingredients in a large jar until combined.
STEP 2 Cover noodles with hot water, soak for 10–12 minutes or until tender. Drain, then rinse with cold water.
STEP 3 Heat an oiled frying pan over a high heat. Season chicken and cook for 2–3 minutes on each side or until cooked through. Halve chicken.
STEP 4 Combine chicken and dressing in a large bowl. Add noodles, cucumber, tomatoes, chillies (if using), half the mango and herbs. Toss to combine.
STEP 5 Serve with remaining herbs, mango, seaweed and peanuts.

CLARISSA'S CHRISTMAS DESSERT BOARD

Preparation time 40 mins
Cooking time 20 mins
Serves 6–8

200g dark chocolate, chopped
1 teaspoon coconut oil
5 corn thins, broken into quarters
20 rice crackers (original flavour)
2 free-range eggs
½ cup milk
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
1–2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
50g butter, chopped
8 thick slices traditional Italian fruit panettone, sliced into thick batons
Icing sugar, to dust
Seasonal fruit skewers, to serve

CHOC DIPPING SAUCE

200g milk chocolate, chopped
⅓ cup pure cream
20g butter

STRAWBERRY AND MANGO SALSAS

250g punnet fresh strawberries, hulled and chopped
1 tablespoon honey
2 tablespoons chopped fresh mint
1 large ripe mango, chopped
Finely grated zest of 1 lime
Juice of ½ lime
2 tablespoons fresh basil leaves

STEP 1 Line a tray with baking paper. Combine dark chocolate and oil in a small bowl set over a saucepan of simmering water. Stir until smooth.Dip corn thins and crackers into mixture to half coat. Transfer to tray. Chill until firm.
STEP 2 For the dipping sauce, combine all ingredients in a small heatproof bowl set over a saucepan of simmering water. Stir until smooth.
STEP 3 For the salsas, combine strawberries, honey and mint in a bowl. In another bowl, combine mango, lime zest, juice and basil.
STEP 4 Whisk egg, milk, vanilla and cinnamon in a shallow bowl. Heat butter in a large frying pan over medium heat.
STEP 5 Dip panettone in egg mixture, coating all sides. Drain excess mixture. Fry for 3–4 minutes, turning occasionally, until golden. Dust with icing sugar.
STEP 6 Serve panettone with salsas, fruit skewers, sauce and the crackers.

COLIN'S GRILLED PEACH AND HAM SALAD

Preparation time 15 mins
Cooking time 25 mins
Serves 6

6 thick slices smoked boneless ham
6 fresh peaches, quartered
6 slices sourdough bread, chopped
2 baby cos, sliced or torn
1 medium bulb fennel, shaved
1 radicchio, torn
1 bunch radish, sliced thinly
1 bunch basil, leaves torn
1 bunch tarragon, leaves torn
Sea-salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper, to season

GLAZE

200ml extra virgin olive oil
⅓ cup honey
Juice and finely grated zest 1 lemon
1 red chilli, finely chopped
1 tablespoon dijon mustard
2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce
1 tablespoon mustard powder

STEP 1 For the glaze, whisk ingredients in a bowl until smooth.
STEP 2 Heat a frying pan or grill plate on medium heat. Dip ham in glaze and cook 2–3 minutes each side. Remove.
STEP 3 Cook peach quarters in same pan or grill plate, turning regularly, until light golden but not soft. Remove.
STEP 4 Wipe pan or plate clean. To make croutons, cook bread for 2 minutes each side, until golden.
STEP 5 Serve ham and peaches with combined salad ingredients. Spoon over remaining glaze. Scatter with croutons. ■

Food preparation Mel Burge

ALL I WANT FOR
Christmas
Better Homes and Gardens
223+
Recipes, projects and ideas for a great Aussie Christmas
Make with meaning
GIFTING, ORNAMENTS, WREATHS AND MORE!
What a cracker!
Mix and match your Christmas crack recipes
+ Cookies galore
Festive feasting
MADE EASY
Crafted with JOY!

Festive recipes, projects & ideas for the perfect

Aussie Christmas

ON SALE NOW!

Available at supermarkets and newsagents for just $11.99

SCAN ME
Scan the QR code to buy your copy online.

POSH palette

There's no need to spend a fortune on refreshing your tree every year. These clever craft projects create a luxe feeling with low investment. Think five-star upgrades to budget-friendly plastic ornaments, or making magic from fabric and cardstock.

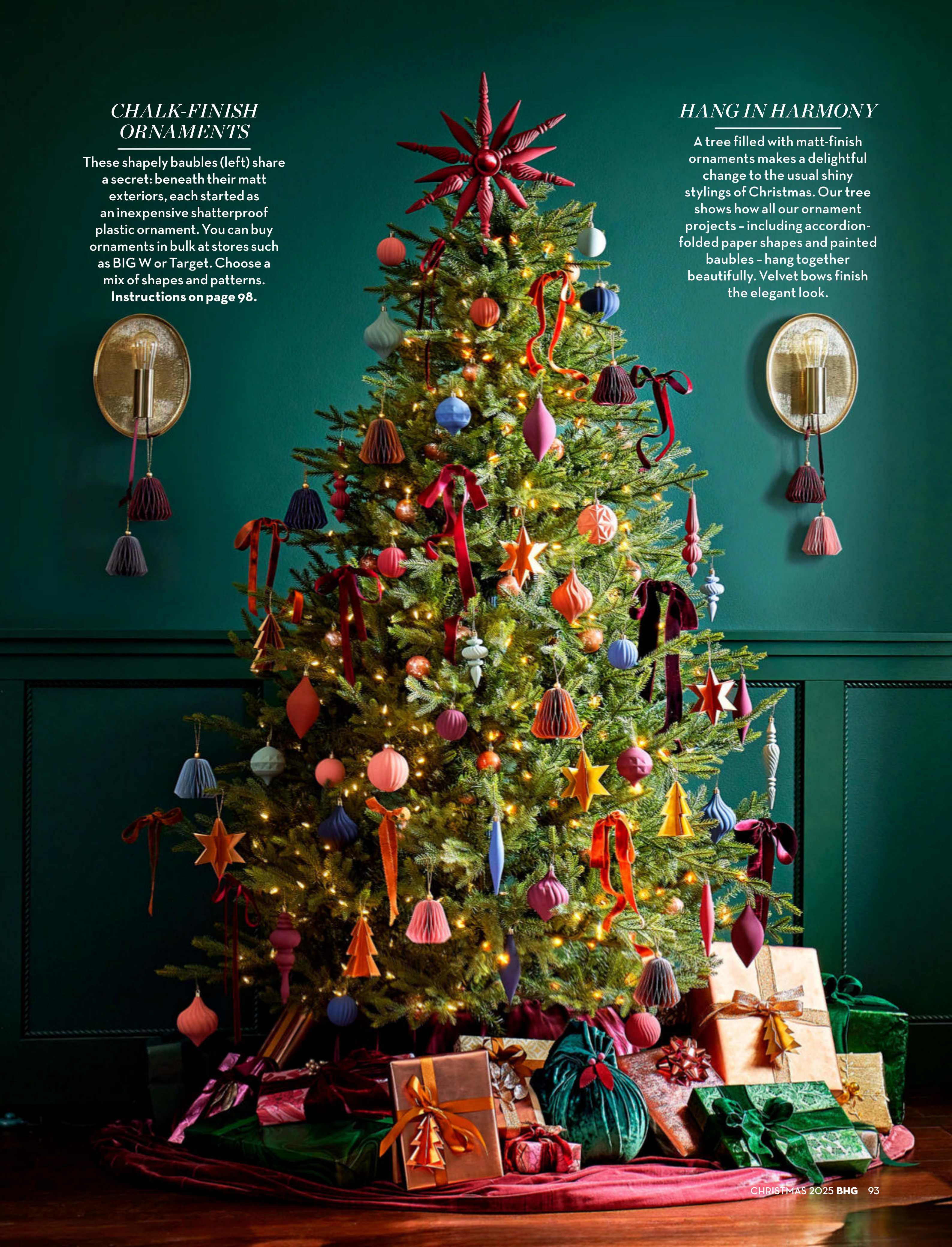
Words KATHY BARNES *Photography* CARSON DOWNING
Styling JESSICA THOMAS *Projects* KIM HUTCHISON

CHALK-FINISH ORNAMENTS

These shapely baubles (left) share a secret: beneath their matt exteriors, each started as an inexpensive shatterproof plastic ornament. You can buy ornaments in bulk at stores such as BIG W or Target. Choose a mix of shapes and patterns. **Instructions on page 98.**

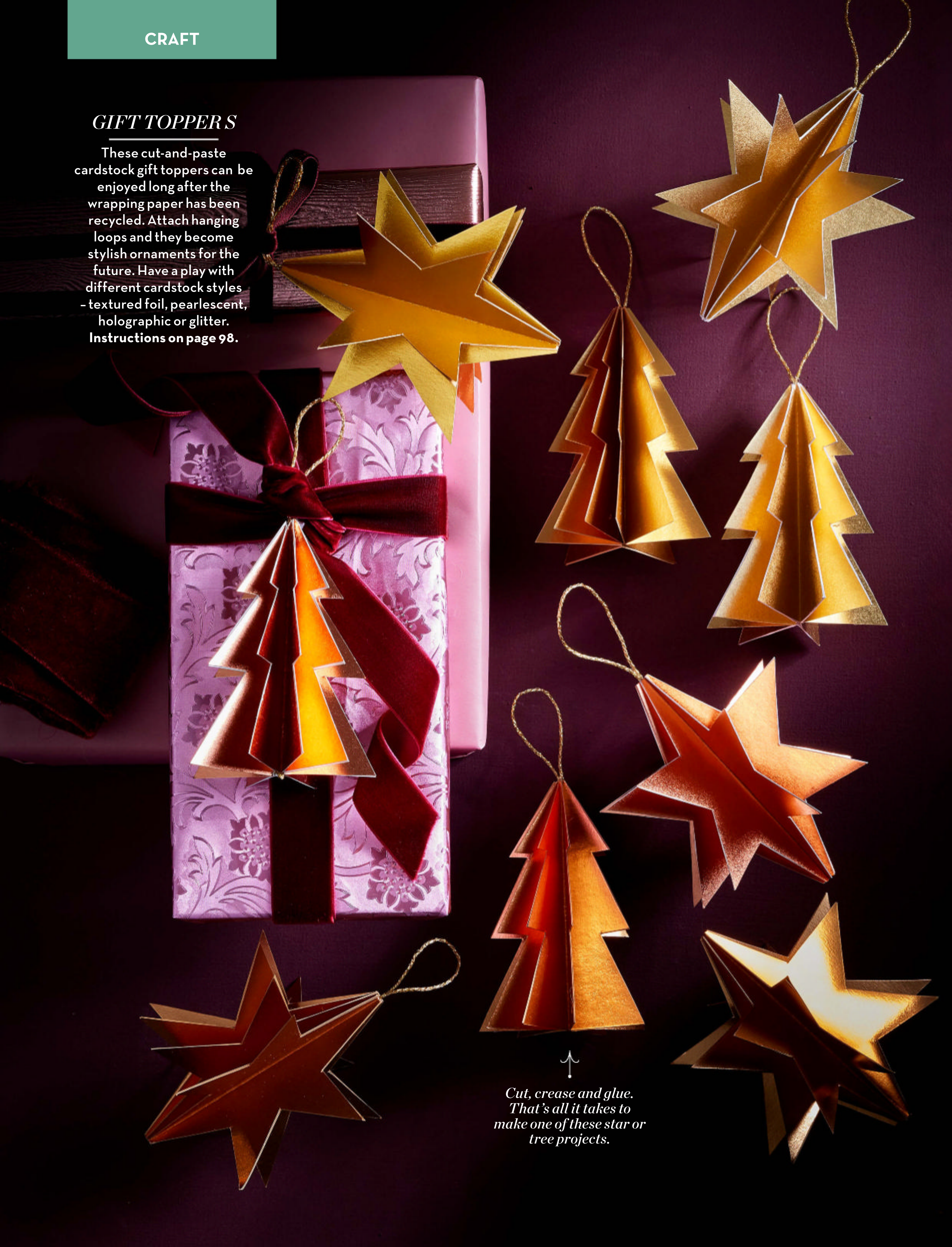
HANG IN HARMONY

A tree filled with matt-finish ornaments makes a delightful change to the usual shiny stylings of Christmas. Our tree shows how all our ornament projects – including accordion-folded paper shapes and painted baubles – hang together beautifully. Velvet bows finish the elegant look.

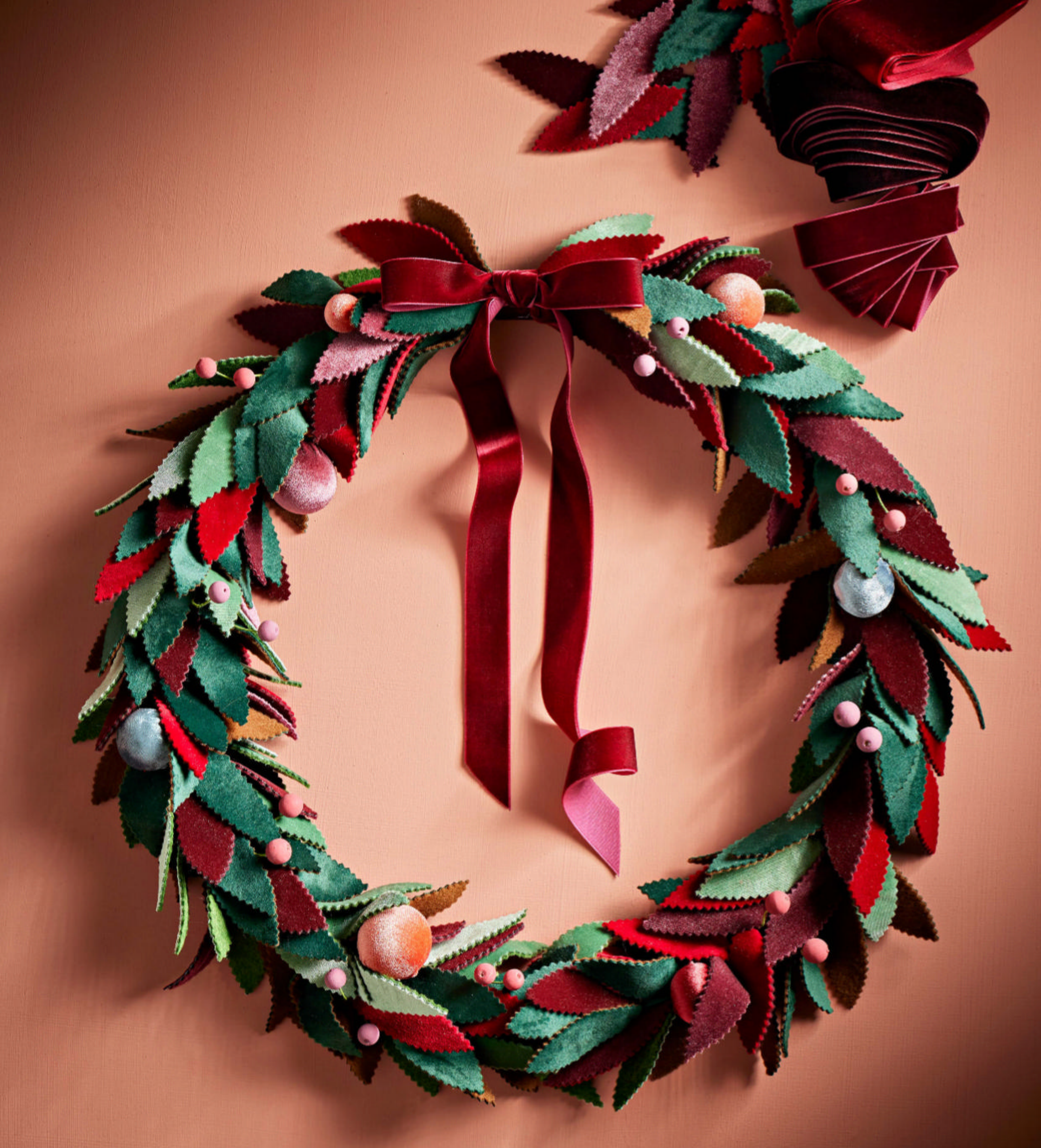


GIFT TOPPERS

These cut-and-paste cardstock gift toppers can be enjoyed long after the wrapping paper has been recycled. Attach hanging loops and they become stylish ornaments for the future. Have a play with different cardstock styles – textured foil, pearlescent, holographic or glitter. **Instructions on page 98.**



Cut, crease and glue. That's all it takes to make one of these star or tree projects.

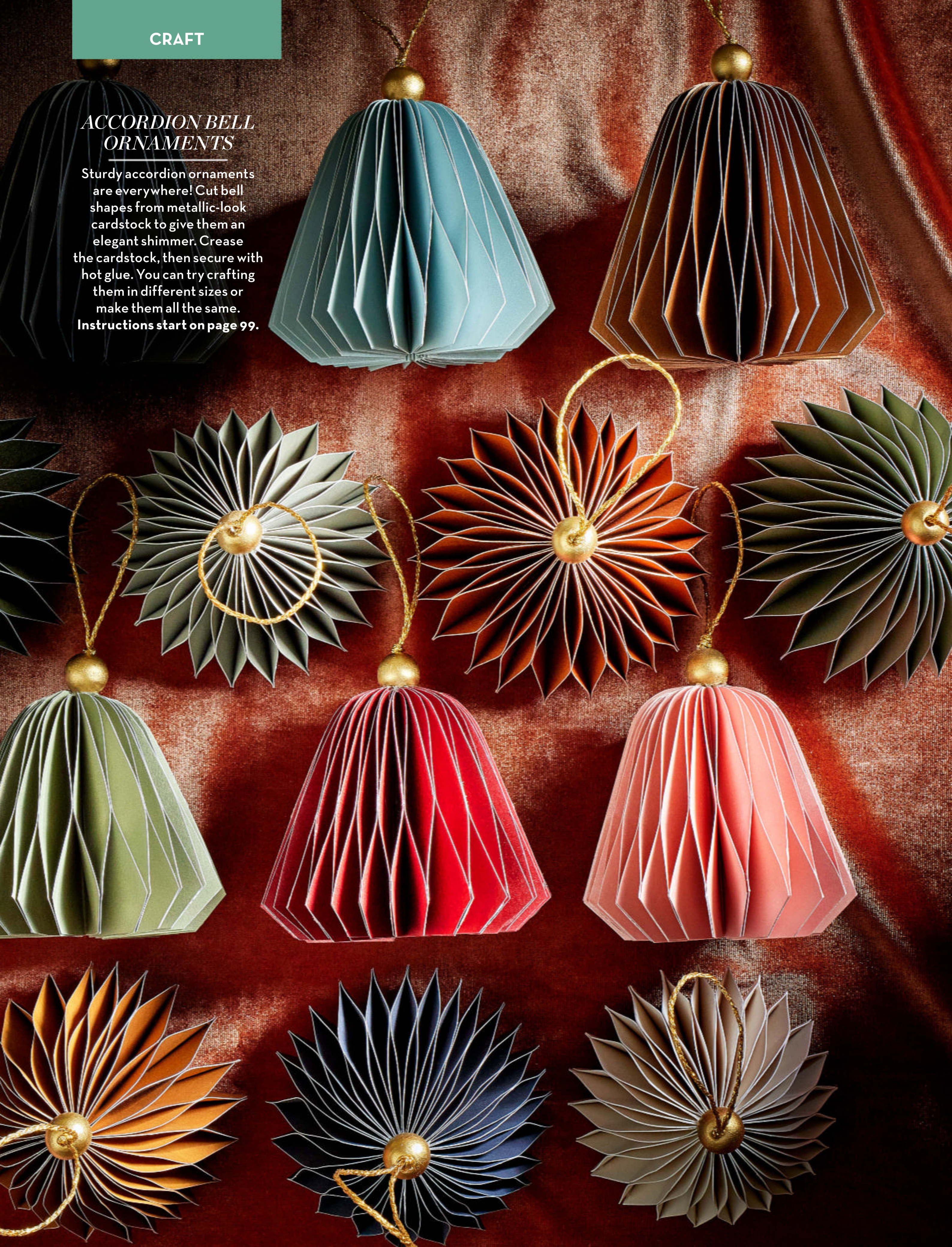


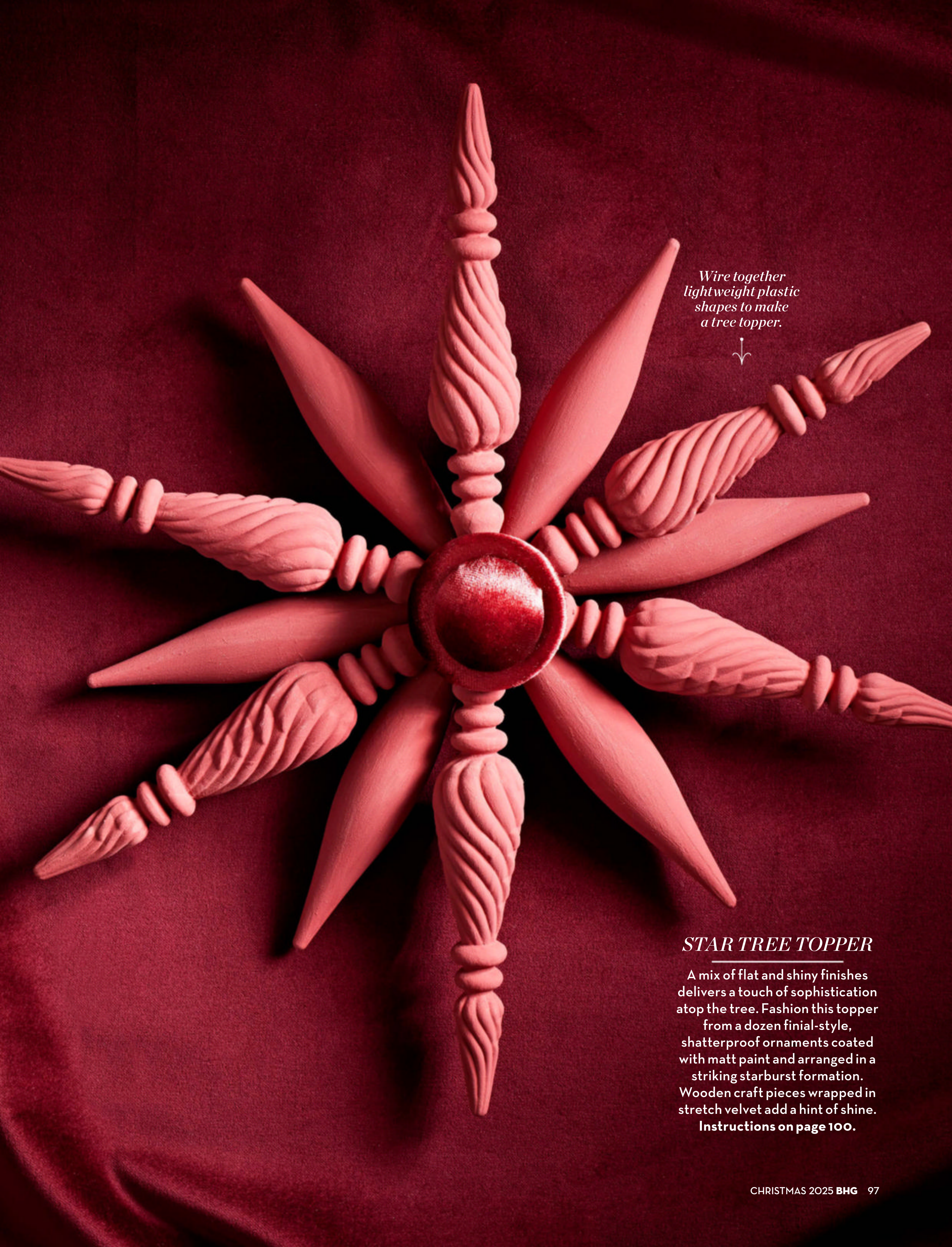
VELVET LEAF WREATH

A simple cut-leaf wreath made from richly coloured velvet or suede looks lush hanging on the door. Finish it with 'berries' made from beads in different sizes. Some are small and painted, others are larger and wrapped in stretch velvet. Complete it with a sumptuous velvet bow and you have an everlasting wreath. **Instructions on page 98.**

ACCORDION BELL ORNAMENTS

Sturdy accordion ornaments are everywhere! Cut bell shapes from metallic-look cardstock to give them an elegant shimmer. Crease the cardstock, then secure with hot glue. You can try crafting them in different sizes or make them all the same. **Instructions start on page 99.**





Wire together lightweight plastic shapes to make a tree topper.

STAR TREE TOPPER

A mix of flat and shiny finishes delivers a touch of sophistication atop the tree. Fashion this topper from a dozen finial-style, shatterproof ornaments coated with matt paint and arranged in a striking starburst formation. Wooden craft pieces wrapped in stretch velvet add a hint of shine. **Instructions on page 100.**

CHALK-FINISH ORNAMENTS

Gather your supplies

- Container for mixing
- Plaster powder (we used Plaster of Paris)
- Matt-finish craft paint
- Assorted shatterproof ornaments
- Bamboo skewers
- Gloves
- Paintbrush
- Foam block
- String or ribbon for hanging

Here's how

STEP 1 Mix together 1 tablespoon each of plaster and cold water. Stir until smooth, then mix in 60ml (¼ cup) of craft paint.

STEP 2 Remove the hanging caps from your ornaments and place the ornaments on skewers. Wearing gloves, paint ornaments with plaster mix, then stick the skewers into a foam block while ornaments dry.

STEP 3 Apply one or two additional coats, letting the paint dry between coats.

STEP 4 Replace the hanging caps and add string or ribbon for hanging.

GIFT TOPPERS

Gather your supplies

- Star and tree templates
- Metallic cardstock
- Craft knife
- Bone folder
- Glue stick
- Gold cording

Here's how

STEP 1 Trace and cut out your desired template (see opposite) eight times on cardstock. Fold each shape in half with a bone folder.

STEP 2 Coat one side of a folded shape with glue. Stack a second folded shape on top so all edges align, then press to secure. Continue to glue and stack the remaining folded shapes.

STEP 3 Cut a 15cm length of cording and fold in half. Glue 2cm of the cut ends to the top of the spine of the stacked shapes to make a loop.

STEP 4 Glue the opposite ends of the stack together.

VELVET LEAF WREATH

Gather your supplies

- Double-sided adhesive sheets
- Three sheets each of felt in: red, emerald, sage, maroon, brown
- 25cm each of stretch velvet fabric in: red, emerald, sage, maroon, brown
- Leaf template
- Marking pen
- Pinking shears
- 18-gauge cloth-wrapped florist stem wire
- 350mm wreath form
- Low-temperature hot-glue gun
- Pink-painted 12mm wood beads
- Round wooden curtain rod finials or knobs in about 19mm (¾ inch) and 25mm (1 inch) sizes
- Velvet ribbon

Here's how

STEP 1 Follow package instructions to adhere double-sided adhesive sheets to all felt sheets. Adhere felt sheets to the back of the matching colour of velvet. Cut away the excess fabric.

STEP 2 Trace the leaf template (opposite) onto the felt side of all sheets, maximising the number of leaves on each sheet. Cut out leaves using pinking shears.

STEP 3 Cut 45cm lengths of florist wire – you'll need 24. Glue leaves about every 0.5–1cm along each wire by wrapping a leaf tip around the wire and securing with hot glue.

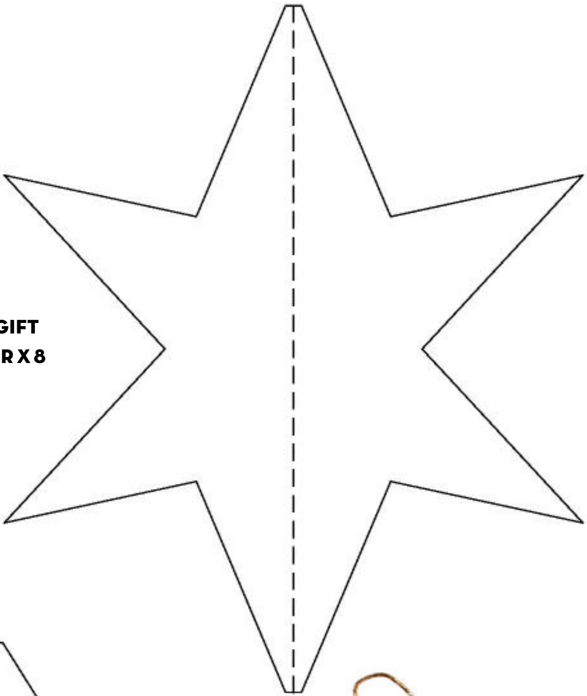
STEP 4 Keeping leaves pointed in the same direction, wrap leafy wires around one half of the wreath form in a spiral, overlapping the leaves and securing the end of the wire to the form. Repeat on the other half with leaves facing the opposite direction.

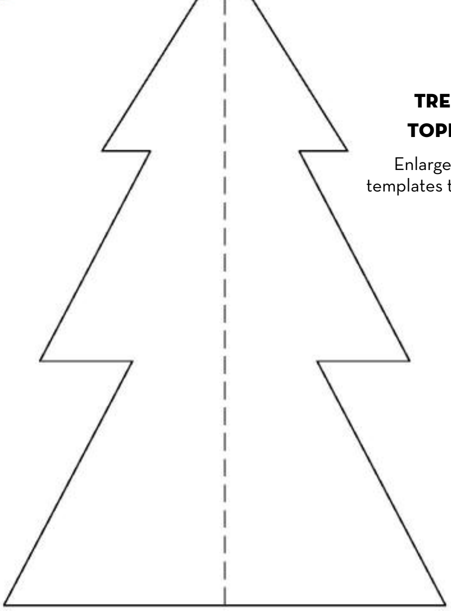
STEP 5 Cut 10cm lengths of florist wire and hot-glue a bead to each end. Twist around the wreath form.

STEP 6 Cut and hot-glue a small circle of velvet to each dowel cap, securing the fabric ends inside the cap. Cut a 15cm piece of wire, fold in half, and hot-glue the folded side into the cap's hole. Twist the wire around the wreath form.

STEP 7 Tie a long piece of velvet ribbon into a bow and hot-glue to the wreath.

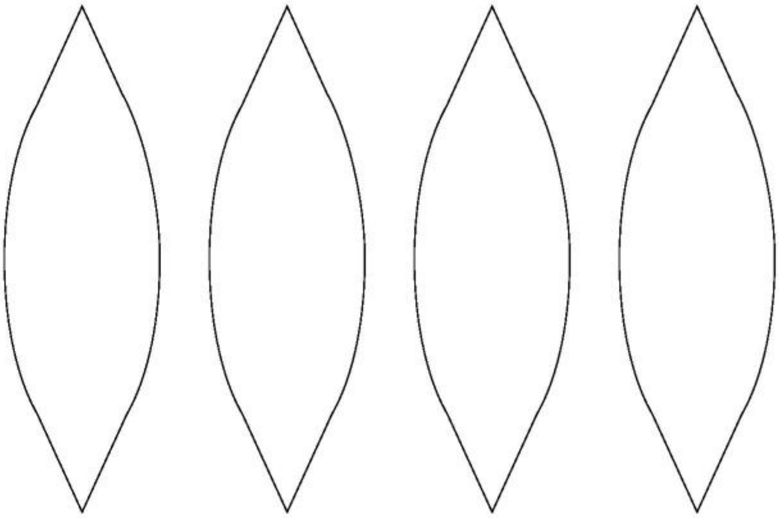
STAR GIFT TOPPER X 8





TREE GIFT TOPPER X 8

Enlarge or reduce templates to desired size



VELVET LEAF WREATH LEAVES (WE USED ABOUT 96)

Cut out as many leaves as possible from the felt side of each sheet. Maximise the number of leaves, using the same strategy as if you were cutting cookies out of dough.

ACCORDION BELL ORNAMENTS

Gather your supplies

- Bell template
- Craft knife
- Assorted double-sided metallic cardstock
- Bone folder
- Fine-tip hot-glue gun
- Gold cord
- Gold 10mm or 12mm wood beads

Here's how

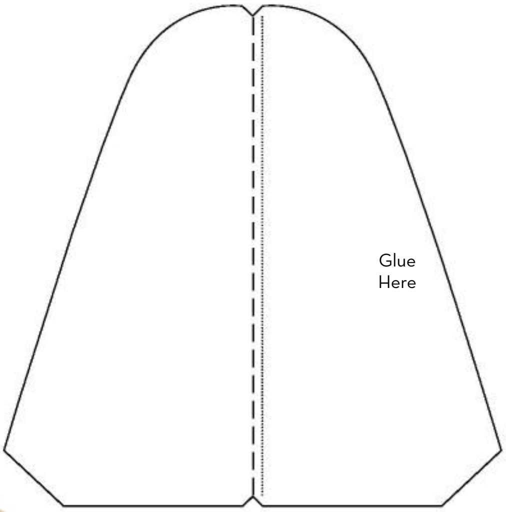
STEP 1 Use the template (on following page) to trace 24 bell shapes onto cardstock and cut out. Fold each shape in half with the bone folder, then unfold.

STEP 2 Add a dab of glue as shown on the template, then pinch the folded shape together in that spot. Repeat with remaining shapes.

STEP 3 Run a line of glue parallel to the folded edge as shown on the template. Stack a second folded shape on top so all edges align, then press to secure. Continue to glue and stack remaining folded shapes. (For ease, secure six shapes together at a time and then secure the four stacks of six together.)

STEP 4 Cut a 20cm piece of cord. Fold and thread the folded end through a bead, pulling it through about 7.5cm before knotting the thread on top of the bead.
STEP 5 Glue the tails of the cord to the stacked bell shapes so the bead rests on top of the finished shape.
STEP 6 Bring the opposite ends of the stack together and join with glue to form the accordion bell.

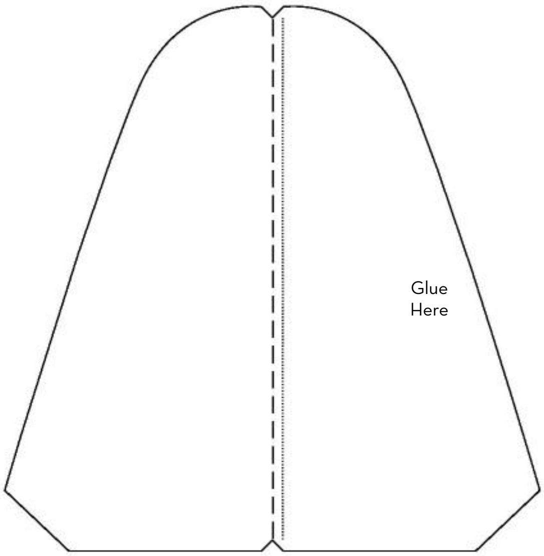
SMALL ACCORDION BELL ORNAMENTS X 24



Fold along dashed lines

Glue along dotted lines

LARGE ACCORDION BELL ORNAMENTS X 24



STAR TREE TOPPER

Gather your supplies

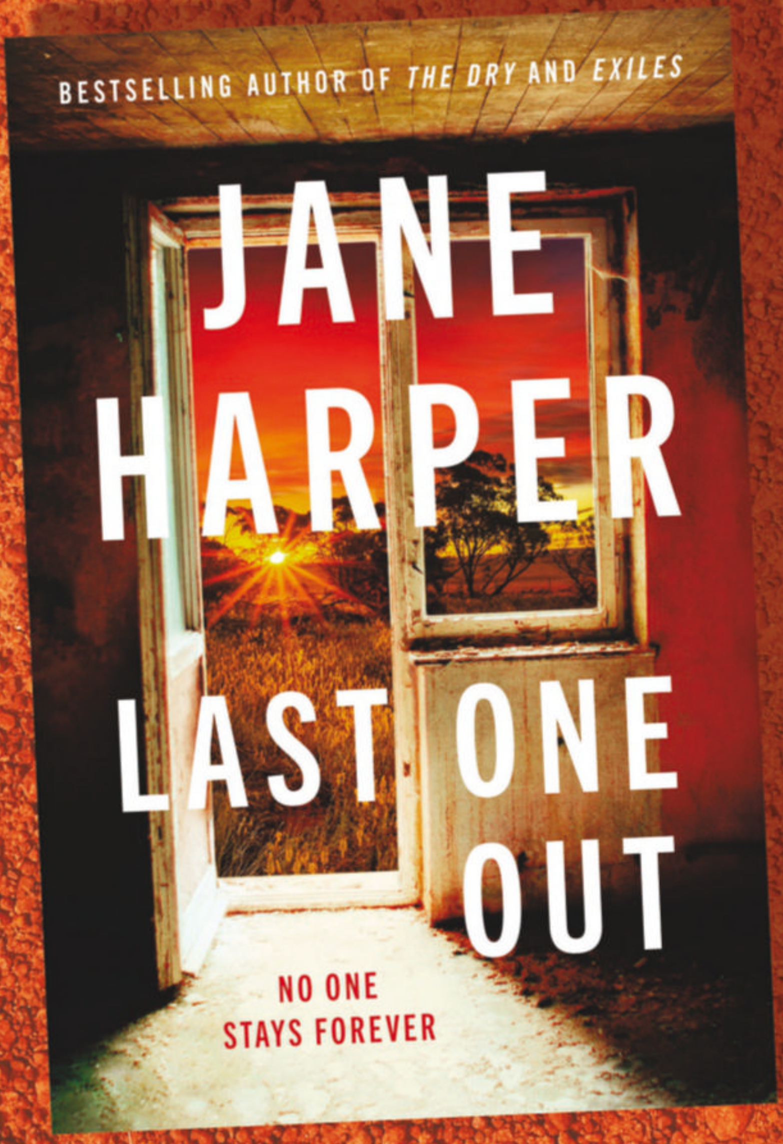
- 12 finial-style shatterproof ornaments in two lengths (about 12.5cm and 18cm)
- Six 30cm lengths of 5mm wood dowel
- Hot-glue gun
- 50mm wood ring
- Florist wire
- 60mm wood circle
- 35mm wood half ball
- Small piece of stretch velvet fabric

Here's how

STEP 1 Refer to the materials list and follow steps 1–3 in Chalk-Finish Ornaments instructions on page 98 to apply a matt finish to ornaments.
STEP 2 Place two of the same-length ornaments on each end of a dowel and secure with hot glue. Repeat with remaining ornaments and dowels.
STEP 3 Lay the three dowels with shorter ornaments on top of a wood ring, overlapping at the centre to create a starburst formation. Hot-glue where the ornaments touch the ring. Repeat with the longer ornaments, arranging them between the shorter ornaments. Wrap wire around the centre of the topper to secure.
STEP 4 Wrap the wood circle and the half ball with velvet fabric, securing on the back side with hot glue. Glue the wood circle to the centre of the starburst, then glue the half ball on top of the circle.
STEP 5 Thread florist wire through the back of the star to attach to the tree. ■

FOR PROJECT SUPPLIES, SEE STOCKISTS ON PAGE 188.

‘CLAUSTROPHOBIC AND COMPELLING’
ANN CLEEVES


BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF *THE DRY* AND *EXILES*
JANE HARPER
LAST ONE OUT
NO ONE STAYS FOREVER

‘AN EXCEPTIONAL BOOK . . .
UTTERLY BRILLIANT’
MARIAN KEYES

MACMILLAN
Pan Macmillan Australia

Available where all good books are sold.

Ready. Set. GRAZE.

The merriest way to start off Christmas morning? Bring out a brunch board!

Photography JASON DONNELLY
Food styling KELSEY MOYLAN

BREAKFAST SCONES

Preparation time 5 mins
Cooking time 20 mins
Makes 12

- **3 cups self-raising flour, plus extra for dusting**
- **100g cold unsalted butter, finely chopped**
- **2 tablespoons caster sugar**
- **1 free-range egg, lightly beaten**
- **1–1¼ cups buttermilk, plus extra for brushing**
- **1 tablespoon raw sugar**
- **Boiled eggs, crispy streaky bacon, jam, sliced fresh fruit, to serve**

STEP 1 Preheat oven to 200°C/180°C fan-forced. Grease and line two baking trays with baking paper.

STEP 2 Place flour in a large bowl. Add butter. Using your fingertips, rub in butter until mixture resembles fine crumbs. Stir in caster sugar.

STEP 3 Make a well in the centre. Add egg and 1 cup of the buttermilk. Using a flat-bladed knife, stir until the mixture just comes together, adding the remaining ¼ cup buttermilk, if required. Dough should be sticky.

STEP 4 Divide dough in half. Pat or lightly roll each portion into a 15cm circle on a floured surface. Cut each circle into six wedges. Place wedges 4cm apart on prepared trays. Brush with additional milk and sprinkle with raw sugar. Bake for 20 minutes until golden Remove; cool on a wire rack.

STEP 5 Serve scones with boiled eggs, bacon, maple butter, vanilla bean cream (recipes at right), jam and fresh fruit.

SCONE MIX-INS

Supercharge your scones with your favourite flavour boost. Gently fold in one of these ingredients after stirring in the buttermilk in step 3.

- **1 cup fresh or frozen blueberries or raspberries and ½ teaspoon lemon zest**
- **1 cup cranberries (fresh or frozen) and ½ teaspoon orange zest**
- **½ cup chopped fresh or frozen strawberries**
- **¾ cup dark, white or milk chocolate chips**
- **1 cup dried fruit, such as raisins, currants, cranberries or chopped dried apricots**
- **¾ cup pecan or walnut pieces or sliced almonds, toasted**

Serve with MAPLE BUTTER

In a small bowl, beat 100g softened butter, 3 tablespoons pure maple syrup and 1 teaspoon vanilla extract until smooth. Store, covered, in the fridge for up to 1 week.

VANILLA BEAN CREAM

Whip 300ml thickened cream, 2 tablespoons sifted icing sugar and 2 teaspoons vanilla bean paste (or vanilla extract) in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a whisk attachment until soft peaks form. ■

made to share

Create delicious homemade gifts for thoughtful pressies this year.

Photography CARSON DOWNING *Styling* KELSEY MOYLAN *Recipes* MAGGIE GLISAN

STRAWBERRY JAM

Preparation time 5 mins
Cooking time 15 mins
Makes 3 cups

1 teaspoon vanilla bean paste or vanilla extract
2 x 250g punnets fresh strawberries, hulled, halved
500g packet jam-setting sugar

STEP 1 Place two small plates in the freezer for testing jam.
STEP 2 Add all ingredients to a large, heavy-based saucepan. Stir on low heat until sugar dissolves. Increase heat to high and bring to a boil. Boil, uncovered, stirring occasionally, for 8–10 minutes, or until the jam reaches setting point. Remove from heat.
STEP 3 To test the jam has reached its setting point, place 1 teaspoon jam onto a chilled plate. Run your finger or push a teaspoon through the jam. If it wrinkles and doesn't run together, the jam is at setting point and is ready to be bottled. If it's still runny, continue to cook until it reaches this point.
STEP 4 Let the jam rest for 2 minutes. Pour hot jam into two sterilised jars (1½-cup capacity) and seal. (See tip on page 106.)

fresh CRANBERRY-PEPITA buttermilk bread

CRANBERRY-PEPITA BUTTERMILK BREAD

Preparation time 20 mins
Cooking time 55 mins
Serves 8

2 cups plain flour
¾ cup caster sugar, plus ¼ cup extra
2½ teaspoons baking powder
¼ teaspoon bicarbonate soda
2 free-range eggs, lightly beaten
1 cup buttermilk
85g unsalted butter, melted
½ cup craisins
½ cup pepitas, toasted, plus ¼ cup extra
2 teaspoons finely grated orange zest

STEP 1 Preheat oven to 180°C/160°C fan-forced. Grease and line a 20cm x 10cm loaf pan with baking paper. In a large bowl, stir together flour, sugar, baking powder and bicarbonate soda. Make a well in the flour mixture.
STEP 2 In a medium bowl, whisk the eggs, buttermilk and melted butter. Add egg mixture all at once to the flour mixture. Stir just until moistened (batter should be lumpy). Fold in the craisins, pepitas and orange zest.
STEP 3 Spoon batter into prepared loaf pan. Coarsely chop remaining pepitas. In a small bowl, combine chopped pepitas and extra sugar. Sprinkle evenly over batter.
STEP 4 Bake for 55 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in its centre comes out clean. Cover with foil in the final 5–10 minutes if it's overbrowning. Cool loaf in pan on a wire rack for 10 minutes. Remove loaf from pan and let it cool completely on the wire rack.

GIFTING TIP

Wrap the cooled loaf in the middle of a clean tea towel. Fold the top and bottom ends of the towel over the loaf and tie sides on top, tucking the tied ends into folds. Finish with fresh greenery, string and a gift tag.

3T. VODKA
1T. LIMONCELLO
1T. CRANBERRY
JUICE
ONCELLO
OSMO
VODKA
LIMONCELLO
CRANBERRY
JUICE

LIMONCELLO

Preparation time 25 mins plus 10 days steeping
Cooking time 5 mins
Makes about 1.5 litres

10 large lemons
750ml bottle vodka
3 cups caster sugar
2½ cups water

STEP 1 Thoroughly scrub lemons with a clean sponge. Using a vegetable peeler, remove yellow peel in thin strips until you have 2 cups lemon peel. (If you want, juice the lemons and reserve the juice for another use.)
STEP 2 In a sterilised 2-litre glass jar (see tip), combine 2 cups lemon peel and vodka. Cover jar with a tight-fitting lid. Set aside in a cool, dry place to steep for 10 days, gently swirling the mixture each day.
STEP 3 Strain mixture through a fine-mesh sieve set over a large bowl. Discard the lemon peel. Return lemon-infused vodka to the jar.
STEP 4 For the syrup, in a medium saucepan, combine sugar and water on low heat, stirring until the sugar dissolves. Increase heat to high and bring to the boil. Remove from heat and let cool for 30 minutes.
STEP 5 Pour cooled syrup into the lemon-infused vodka and stir to combine. Cover and chill overnight. Transfer limoncello to sterilised 250ml jars or bottles. Seal and label. Store up to 1 month in the fridge.

GIFTING TIPS

- To sterilise jars, wash them well with soapy water, rinse, then lie the jars down in a large saucepan, cover with cold water and bring to the boil over high heat. Boil for 20 minutes. Use tongs to remove the jars and leave them to air dry.
- Slip a candied or dried lemon slice onto a tag along with a recipe for a limoncello cosmo, which can be shaken with ice and served in a martini or coupe glass.

FOCACCIA

Preparation time 20 mins plus 4 hours proving
Cooking time 30 mins
Serves 8

3 cups plain flour plus 1 cup extra
1½ teaspoons fine salt
1 teaspoon dry yeast
400ml warm water
1½ tablespoons olive oil plus 1 tablespoon extra
Olive oil spray
Pitted olives, garlic slices, fresh rosemary sprigs, to decorate
Sea-salt flakes

STEP 1 In a large bowl, combine 3 cups flour, salt and yeast. Stir in the warm water until the mixture is moistened (the dough will be sticky and soft). Cover bowl loosely with plastic wrap. Let stand at room temperature for 2 hours.

STEP 2 Line a 38cm x 25cm baking pan with baking paper and drizzle with olive oil. Stir the extra 1 cup flour into the dough with a fork. Using a rubber spatula coated with cooking spray, gently spread dough in prepared baking pan (the dough will be sticky). Cover with greased plastic wrap. Let dough rise at room temperature until puffy (1½ to 2 hours).

STEP 3 Preheat oven to 220°C/200°C fan-forced. Poke the dough's top all over with your fingers to create a dimpled surface. If you like, add olives, garlic and/or rosemary. Drizzle the 1 tablespoon oil over the dough. Sprinkle with sea salt. Bake for 30 minutes or until golden. Let cool. Best made on the day of serving.

GIFTING TIPS

- Wrap a strip of waxed paper around the bread and a board and tie it with twine. Attach a rosemary sprig to board handle.
- One focaccia can be sliced into thirds and shared as three gifts. ■

Tasting a better LIFE

Two Good Co gives women at risk of homelessness a safe space to find their confidence and independence.

Words SARAH MURPHY *Photography* PETRINA TINSLAY, KATIE KARRS, JES LINDSAY

The Two Good team support and employ women living in crisis.

It began as a simple act of kindness – Rob Caslick and two mates rolled out a barbecue at Sydney's Kings Cross to cook food for anyone who wanted it. That grew into a soup kitchen using organic produce. Then, in 2016, Two Good Co evolved into a social enterprise that supports, employs and empowers women at risk of homelessness. Its activities now range from providing restaurant-quality meals and running a cafe, to selling Two Good personal care and homewares items.

For women who have had years of living in crisis, abuse and trauma, restoring self-worth is an essential first step towards independence. Every Two Good Co transaction is an act of empowerment for these women.

We spoke to Rob about Two Good Co and its impact, and share a "legend status" Christmas cake recipe from Two Good's latest cookbook.

BHG: How did the idea for Two Good come about?

RC: I was running a soup kitchen in Kings Cross and wanted to come up with a way to significantly increase the amount of meals we were donating without needing to continually fundraise. We began by making beautiful, chef-designed meals. For every meal sold, we donated another one. On hearing that our meals had far greater impact when we donated them to women's shelters, we decided to move our focus to supporting vulnerable women.

BHG: When did you realise the impact your work was having?
RC: After we started to grow, we decided to employ women from the shelters we donated the meals to. I saw the transformational impact you can have simply by believing in someone until they believe in themselves again. It was incredible to witness the change in someone, both physically and mentally. That's when I quit my engineering job to focus on Two Good Co full time.

Two Good Co exists to change the course of the lives of vulnerable women, but it's not us doing any of the changing. All we do is create a safe space for change to happen, and it's the incredible women we employ who find their belief in themselves.

BHG: Tell us a bit more about the Two Good Work Work initiative.
RC: It's a six-month, paid employment program for women who've experienced homelessness or domestic violence. Work Work gives them above-award wages, job experience in our catering business, and the confidence to re-enter the workforce. The women 'work' for us and we 'work' with them on getting a role after Two Good Co. It's become the heart of what we do.

BHG: Can you explain how programs like yours provide more than just immediate relief?
RC: Domestic violence comes in forms other than physical violence. Women tell us they have been told they are worthless for such a long period of time they come to believe it. We also hear how isolated they were from their friends and families.

In October, we'll celebrate the 200th woman through our program. We have more than 200 stories to share – but the ones that I get the most joy out of are the stories that involve the kids. Whether it's children being reunited with their mums, or hearing women share stories about their kids saying how proud they are of their mum.

Two Good Co runs a number of catering companies and cafes in Sydney.

Two Good's founder and CEO Rob Caslick.

BHG: If we suspect a friend may be in an unsafe situation, how do we start that conversation?
RC: Just simply ask your friend if they are okay. Your friend may not be willing to share what is going on. The way you support someone may change depending on the circumstances or your relationship with the people involved.

Here are some things to remember:
- If they share with you that their partner is being abusive, believe them.
- Listen to what they have to say and don't try to problem solve or advise.
- Ask what you can do to help.
- Don't judge. It can take a number of attempts before someone leaves, and not everyone can or wants to.
- Let them know that you'll be there for them.
- In any situation, if you think someone is in danger call the police on Triple Zero (000).

BHG: How can we support women in crisis?
RC: There are many incredible organisations supporting women: YWCA, Zonta, WAGEC, Women's Community Shelters. Or you can purchase anything through our website, knowing that 50 per cent of profits go towards supporting our programs for vulnerable women.

Home gifting

This recipe was passed down to Jacquie Imrie, program head chef of Two Good Co from her mum, Shirley, and we can't thank her enough! If you love getting ahead on your festive prep, you can make these cakes up to six months in advance, which also gives you extra time to 'feed' the cakes with alcohol for maximum richness and flavour.

JACQUIE'S CHRISTMAS CAKES

Preparation time 1 hour plus at least 1 day soaking
Cooking time 1½–2 hours (in five 10cm square pans), 3½–3¾ hours (in 20cm round pan)
Makes 5 small cakes or 1 large cake

340g (2 cups) sultanas
240g (1 cup) finely chopped glacé fruit (try apricot, peach, ginger and pineapple)
160g (1 cup) chopped pitted dates
150g (1 cup) chopped mixed peel
180g (¾ cup) glacé cherries, halved, plus extra to decorate
85g (½ cup) raisins
95g (½ cup) chopped dried figs
60ml (¼ cup) sherry (see tips)
60ml (¼ cup) brandy (see tips), plus extra for sprinkling
250g unsalted butter, softened, plus extra for greasing
275g (1¼ cups) brown sugar, firmly packed
5 eggs, at room temperature
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 teaspoon almond essence
1 tablespoon glycerine (see tips)
1 tablespoon golden syrup
1 tablespoon raspberry or plum jam
2 teaspoons grated lemon zest
60ml (¼ cup) lemon juice
300g (2 cups) plain flour
75g (½ cup) self-raising flour
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon ground nutmeg
½ teaspoon ground cloves
½ teaspoon ground ginger
40g (¼ cup) chopped almonds
30g (¼ cup) chopped walnuts or pecans
Whole pecans, for decorating

STEP 1 A day or more before cooking, place all dried and glacé fruits in a large bowl or container. Add sherry and brandy, combine well, then cover and stand for at least 24 hours, or for up to 2 weeks, stirring occasionally.

STEP 2 On the day of cooking, preheat oven to 150°C/130°C fan-forced.

STEP 3 Grease five 10cm square pans or a deep 20cm round cake pan with extra butter and line base and sides with baking paper. Jacquie likes to wrap a few sheets of newspaper around the pans when baking to slow the cooking.

STEP 4 Place butter and sugar in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment and beat until light and fluffy. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition.

STEP 5 In a separate bowl, combine vanilla extract, almond essence, glycerine, golden syrup, jam, lemon zest and juice, then add to the butter mixture and beat until well combined.

A TWO GOOD COOKBOOK COLLECTION
SWEET MEMORIES
CAKES
COOKIES
BISCUITS
BITES
PASTRIES
TARTS
PIES
PUDDINGS
DESSERTS
SWEETS
SPECIAL CAKES
FESTIVE BAKES
NOSTA
COM
TOGE
CELEBRATION

STEP 6 In another bowl, sift together flours and spices, then add to the batter with chopped nuts and soaked fruit and beat until well combined. Spoon batter into pans (or pan) and smooth the top.

STEP 7 Decorate tops with whole pecans and extra glacé cherries, then bake for 1½–2 hours for smaller pans or 3½–3¾ hours for the larger pan, until a skewer inserted in the centre comes out clean.

STEP 8 Remove from the oven, then pour over about 2 tablespoons extra alcohol over the top. Let cakes cool in pans, then remove from pans, wrap in foil and place in an airtight container.

STEP 9 To enhance the flavour before eating or gifting, 'feed' the cakes by drizzling an extra teaspoon of your chosen alcohol over cakes once or twice a fortnight. Don't be tempted to overfeed the cakes or they will become stodgy. Cakes will keep, tightly wrapped, in an airtight container for up to 6 months.

COOK'S TIPS

- Glycerine helps keep the cake moist during baking and is available from supermarkets.
- Instead of using 60ml (¼ cup) each of sherry and brandy, you could substitute 125ml (½ cup) rum. ■

SCAN ME

Scan to buy Two Good's *Sweet Memories* recipe collection, with 50 per cent of profits going towards supporting women living in crisis.

NEED HELP? If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic violence or feels unsafe, contact:
• 1800 Respect national helpline: 1800 737 732 or text 0458 737 732 • DV Connect Womensline: 1800 811 811 • Lifeline: 13 11 14
• Relationships Australia: 1300 364 277 • If in immediate danger, call Triple Zero (000)

JACQUIE'S CHRISTMAS CAKES

> “These Christmas cakes have achieved legend status – every year we hope we're still on Jacquie's nice list so we receive a little package of joy.”

ROB CASLICK, TWO GOOD CO FOUNDER

FAST FOOD

...that's good for you

Sow now to reap summer salads that are fresher than you've ever tasted!

Words **JENNY DILLON**

Salad days is an old-fashioned expression for that period when young people haven't had much experience in life. If that's you when it comes to gardening, then growing summer salad vegetables is where you start. Beginner gardeners can see seeds sprint from the soil into salad bowls in as little as four weeks! Read on to catch the salad gardening bug – you may find longer-term garden projects will soon follow!

Harvesting your vegies is best done in the morning before the sun gets too hot. This is when your crops are crisp, juicy and bursting with flavour.

SUMMER salad stars

Quick-growing summer vegetables include good-for-you leafy greens such as lettuce, spinach, rocket, kale and warrigal greens, root vegetables such as radishes and baby carrots, and vining plants such as beans, cucumbers and zucchinis.

LEAFY GREENS

Lettuce

Loose-leaf lettuce varieties (eg, oak leaf, salad bowl green or red) are great for picking individual leaves, and can be ready for harvest just 45–50 days after sowing seeds. For head-forming varieties (eg, mignonette, iceberg), it can take 10–12 weeks for them to be ready.

Spinach

Many varieties are fast-growing and can be harvested as baby leaves after 30–40 days. Or you can pick whole plants 5–6 weeks after sowing seeds.

Rocket

This popular peppery-flavoured leafy green is ready for harvest in about 40–60 days. Hand-pick individual leaves to extend the harvest or pull up the entire plant.

Kale

For an ornamental touch, grow kale with ruffled, curly, flat or deeply cut leaves in blue-green, green, pink or burgundy – yes, the latter two are edible, if slightly bitter. Depending on the variety, you can pick baby leaves in about 30 days, with mature leaves ready for harvest in 55–65 days.

Warrigal greens

Once only available to keen, experienced foragers, this native spinach substitute can be harvested in about 50 days, but earlier regular picking encourages new growth.

Loose-leaf lettuce is a cut-and-come-again crop.

Baby spinach leaves sweeten up a salad.

Rocket's flavour grows more intense as it matures.

The nutrient density of kale makes it a superfood.

Warrigal greens have a salty flavour.

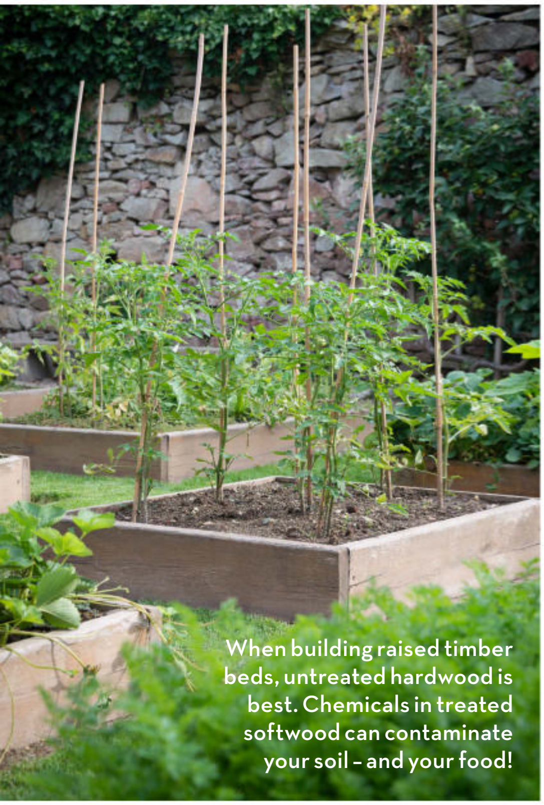
Keep your gardening aids and tools tidy and sheltered from summer rains.

Why *WARP SPEED?*

Summer salad vegetables grow fast for a number of reasons:

- Many of our summer salad vegies are annuals so have very short life cycles.
- The days are longer and more hours of sunshine allow plants to photosynthesise more.
- Warmer temperatures speed up plants' growth.
- Higher humidity provides some of the moisture essential for plants to thrive.

Salad greens are just as easy to grow in pots as in a vegie patch – and pots or containers are especially handy if your sunniest spot is a deck or porch. Simply scatter seeds over potting mix, cover lightly with more potting mix and water daily.



When building raised timber beds, untreated hardwood is best. Chemicals in treated softwood can contaminate your soil – and your food!

Garden bed or container?

There's nothing like pottering around your vegie patch, but there are advantages to growing summer salad vegetables and herbs in containers. For one thing, fresh, quality potting mix provides better drainage and air flow. But your decision really depends on what spot gets the all-day sun that vegies and herbs need. If your sunniest area is a deck or courtyard, then containers are the go.

If you're planting in a garden bed, remove weeds, aerate the soil by turning over with a spade or garden fork, then dig in quality organic matter to improve drainage and the nutrient levels in the soil.

SCAN ME
Check out these containers for growing your summer salad vegies.

ROOT VEGETABLES

Baby carrots

These sweet little things are ready for harvesting in about 6–8 weeks.

Radishes

Crispy and peppery, radishes are also speedy, taking just 30 days from when you sow the seeds to when you can enjoy that tasty punch in salads.

VINING PLANTS

Beans

There are so many beans you can grow – bush beans, green or snap beans, broad beans, runner beans, climbing beans, snake beans, butter beans – and they can be green, purple, yellow or speckled. The fastest-growing option is bush beans, which are ready 6–8 weeks after sowing seeds.

Cucumbers

Vining cucumbers can produce fruit all through summer, but it's important to harvest them every few days or the fruit can become seedy and bitter. There are many varieties, but the popular lebanese cucumber can be harvested in about 60 days.

Zucchini

Known for rapid growth and abundant fruit, you can harvest zucchini in about 50 days.

FOR SLOWER-GROWING PLANTS SUCH AS TOMATOES, CAPSICUM AND CHILLI, PLANT SEEDLINGS RATHER THAN SEEDS TO BRING ON HARVEST SOONER!

Supermarket 'baby' carrots are mature carrots cut down to size!

Radishes are rubies in your salads.

Bush beans don't need a trellis or other support.

Kirby cukes are ideal for pickling.

Versatile zucchini.

You can grow cucumbers in containers, but they're generally more prolific in the ground. An A-frame provides good air circulation to help prevent disease.

Seedlings have small roots, so access to water is limited. You'll need to keep the soil moist until they're established.

SEED sowing tips

Always read the seed packet instructions carefully. It will have guides on climate, aspect, sowing times, sowing depths and distances. It will tell you whether to sow in seed-raising mix or directly into your garden or container. It will also have watering and feeding needs and when plants will be ready to harvest. All this can vary across the country.

For continuous harvesting through summer and autumn, stagger seed sowing a week or two apart so plants mature at different time. Otherwise you'll have an excess of produce you'll just have to gift to friends and neighbours.

SCAN ME
Order your seeds now for super salads this summer!

HANDY HERBS

Many herbs are annuals, which means they're quick growing. These include:

Basil

It's an annual in temperate regions, but in tropical regions basil is a tender perennial. Harvest 6 weeks after sowing seeds.

Parsley

It's treated as an annual, but if you want to gather its seeds, it will flower in its second year, then die. Harvest 10–16 weeks after sowing seeds.

Coriander

Harvest coriander about 6 weeks after sowing seeds.

Dill

Harvest dill about 10 weeks after sowing seeds.

Perennial herbs

These can work as ornamental plants in flowering garden beds and be grown from seed. But if you'd like to speed things up, pick up mature plants from nurseries. Popular choices include sage, rosemary, oregano, thyme and mint. Plant mint in a separate container – it's super vigorous and can take over your patch! ■

Basil's scent is sweet and spicy.

Parsley is a natural breath freshener.

Coriander has a fresh and citrusy taste.

Dill loses its anise-like flavour when dried.

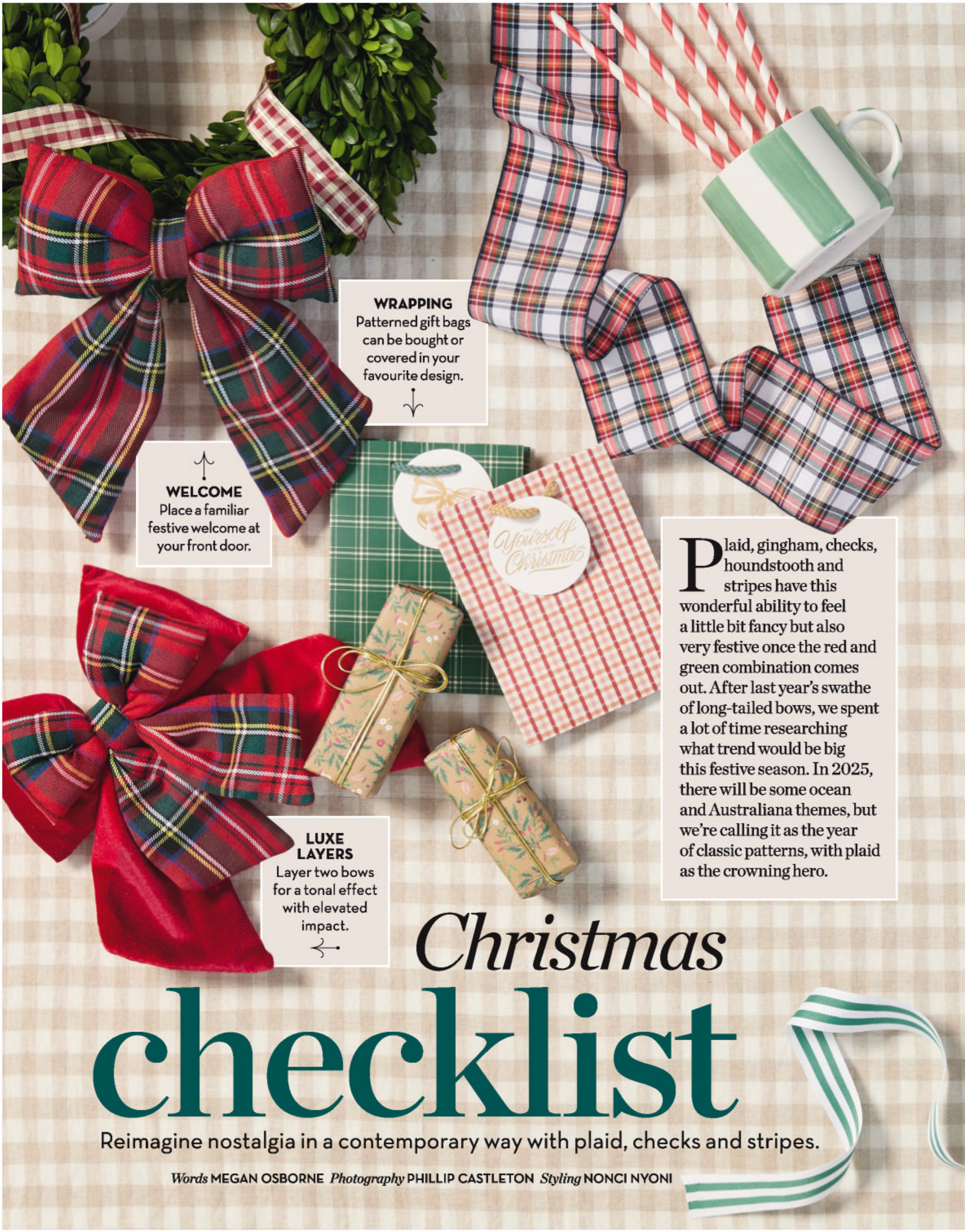
Raised beds mean better drainage, especially if you get lots of rain or have clay soil.

Photography Adobe Stock

“FRESH HERBS HAVE A BRIGHT, CLEAN TASTE AND A SOFT FRAGRANCE.”

JENNY DILLON, GARDEN EDITOR

Using colourful buckets as cover pots lifts the aesthetics of your herb garden. It also protects surfaces from water damage, and the handles make it easier to move plants.



Christmas checklist

Reimagine nostalgia in a contemporary way with plaid, checks and stripes.

Words MEGAN OSBORNE *Photography* PHILLIP CASTLETON *Styling* NONCI NYONI

Plaid, gingham, checks, houndstooth and stripes have this wonderful ability to feel a little bit fancy but also very festive once the red and green combination comes out. After last year's swathe of long-tailed bows, we spent a lot of time researching what trend would be big this festive season. In 2025, there will be some ocean and Australiana themes, but we're calling it as the year of classic patterns, with plaid as the crowning hero.

WRAPPING
Patterned gift bags can be bought or covered in your favourite design.

WELCOME
Place a familiar festive welcome at your front door.

LUXE LAYERS
Layer two bows for a tonal effect with elevated impact.

SWEET GIFT WRAPPING
Play with stripes of the edible variety. Classic candy canes are the perfect cherry on top.

MODERN TWIST
Extend your theme into a modern lens with layered candles and fun striped bon bons.

GINGHAM
Embrace it both small and subtle, like with our tablecloth, or big and bold with a stocking or napkins

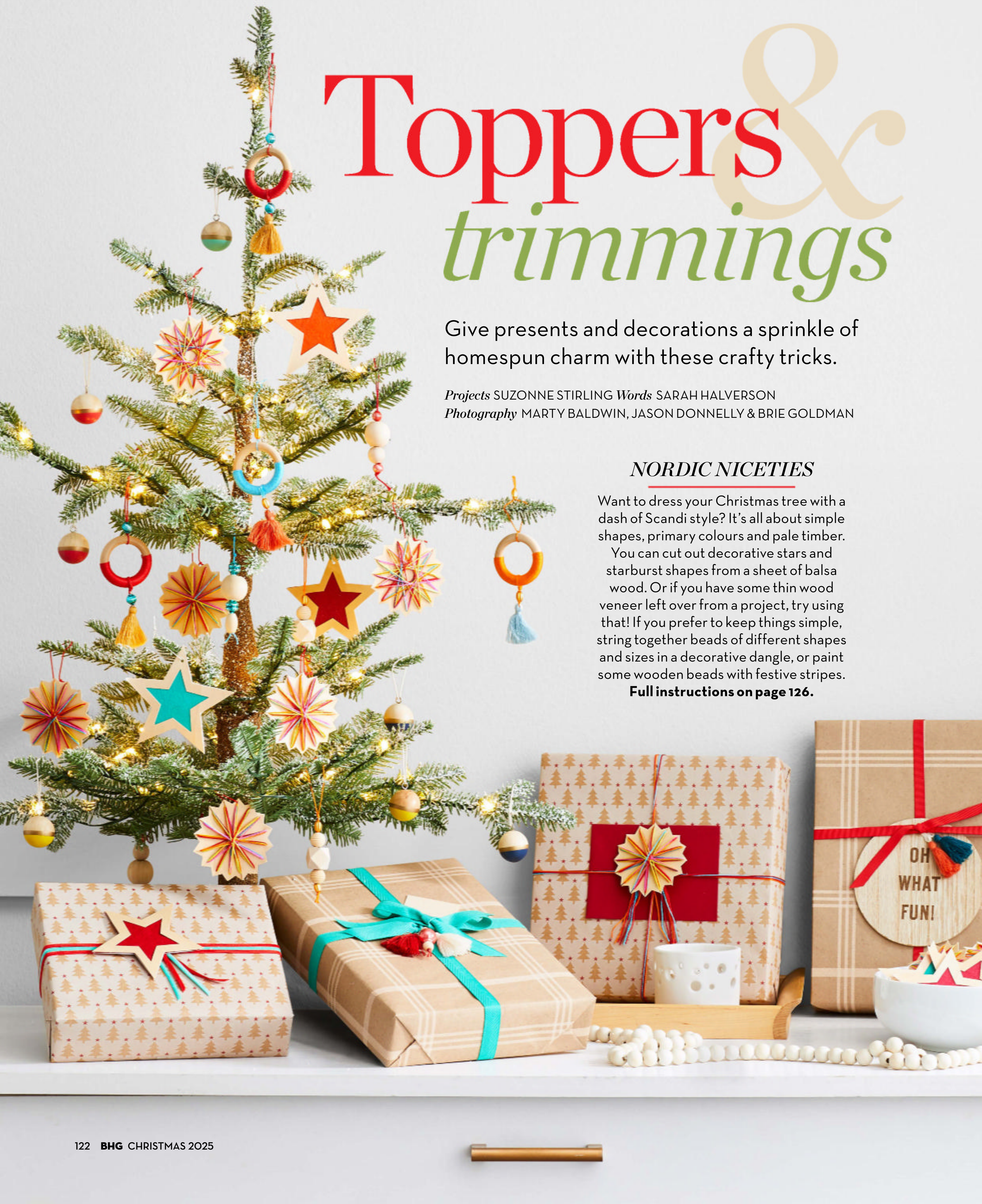
RECYCLED RIBBONS
Don't throw out (good condition) ribbons or string, as you never know when they will come back in style. ■

SCAN ME
Scan this QR code to shop these classic patterns.

Toppers & trimmings

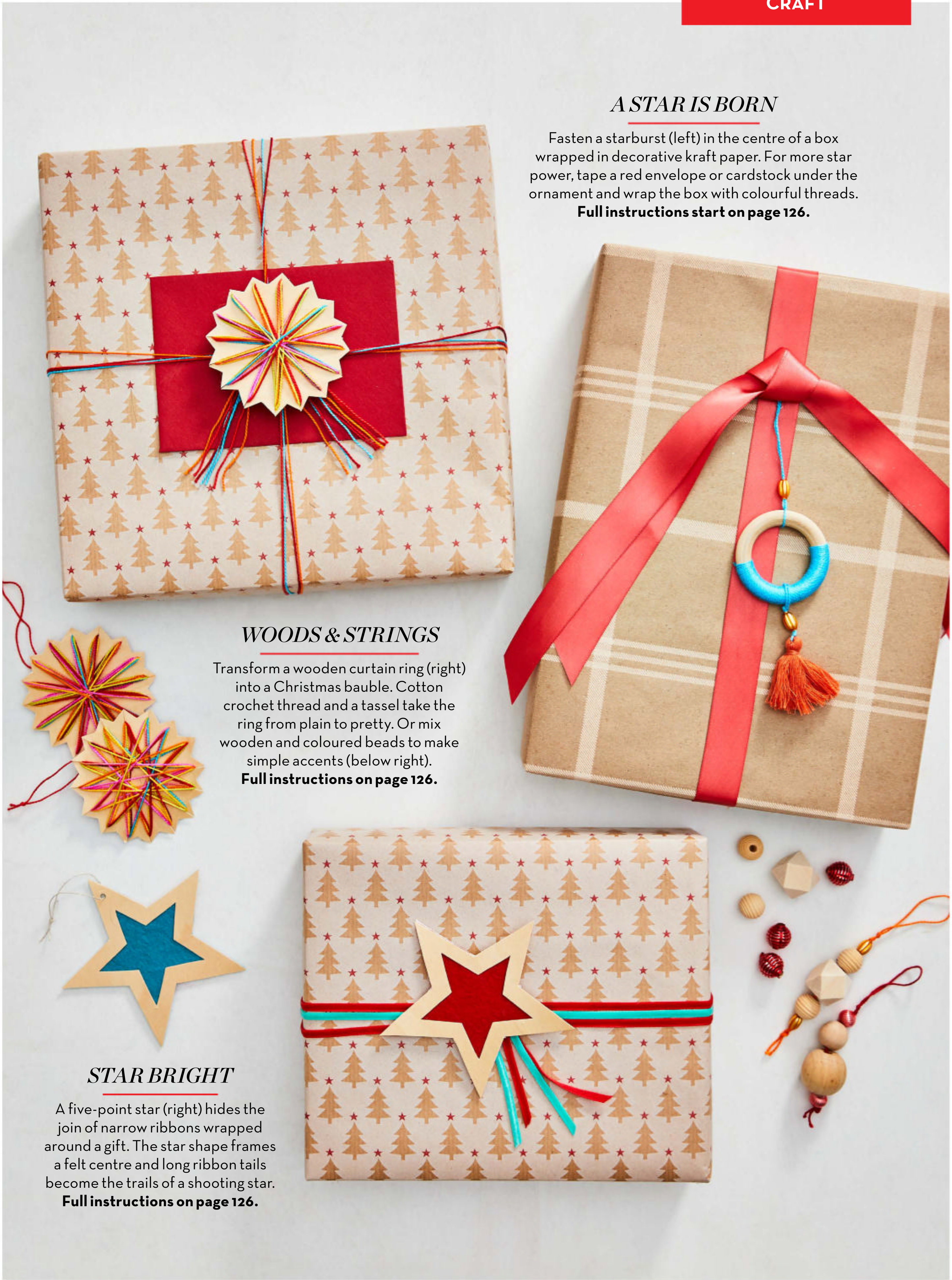
Give presents and decorations a sprinkle of homespun charm with these crafty tricks.

Projects SUZONNE STIRLING *Words* SARAH HALVERSON
Photography MARTY BALDWIN, JASON DONNELLY & BRIE GOLDMAN



NORDIC NICETIES

Want to dress your Christmas tree with a dash of Scandi style? It's all about simple shapes, primary colours and pale timber. You can cut out decorative stars and starburst shapes from a sheet of balsa wood. Or if you have some thin wood veneer left over from a project, try using that! If you prefer to keep things simple, string together beads of different shapes and sizes in a decorative dangle, or paint some wooden beads with festive stripes. **Full instructions on page 126.**



A STAR IS BORN

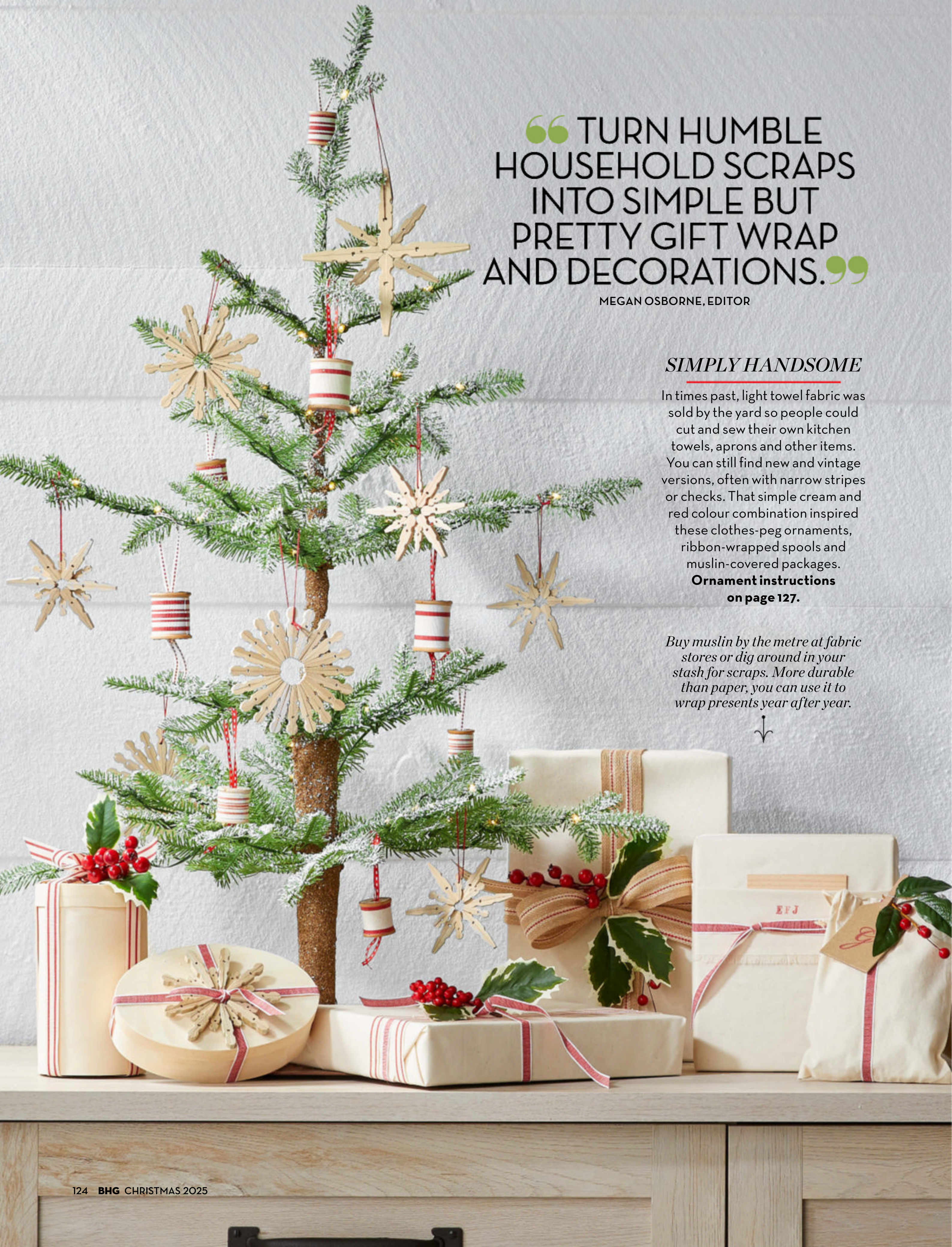
Fasten a starburst (left) in the centre of a box wrapped in decorative kraft paper. For more star power, tape a red envelope or cardstock under the ornament and wrap the box with colourful threads. **Full instructions start on page 126.**

WOODS & STRINGS

Transform a wooden curtain ring (right) into a Christmas bauble. Cotton crochet thread and a tassel take the ring from plain to pretty. Or mix wooden and coloured beads to make simple accents (below right). **Full instructions on page 126.**

STAR BRIGHT

A five-point star (right) hides the join of narrow ribbons wrapped around a gift. The star shape frames a felt centre and long ribbon tails become the trails of a shooting star. **Full instructions on page 126.**



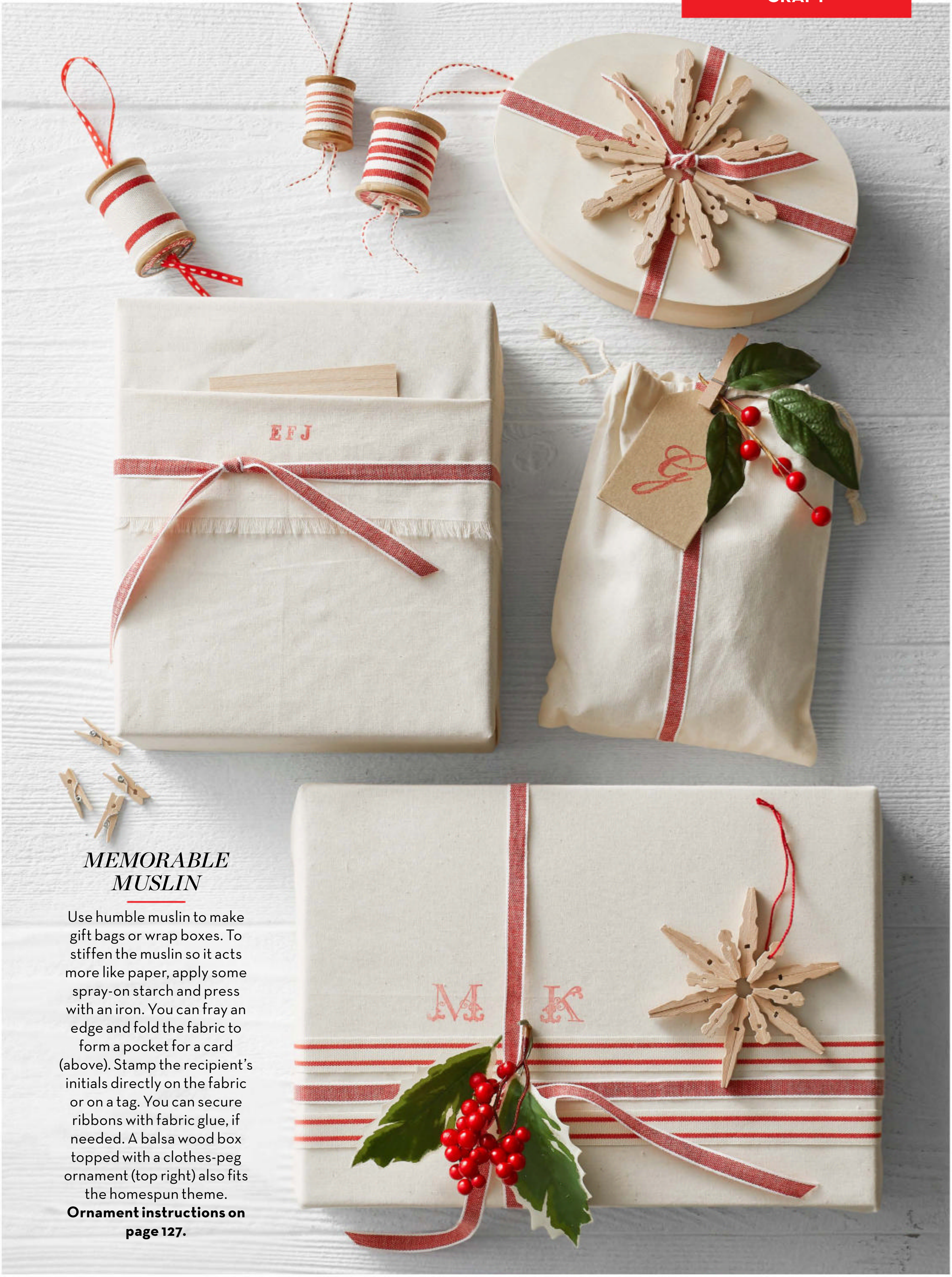
> “TURN HUMBLE HOUSEHOLD SCRAPS INTO SIMPLE BUT PRETTY GIFT WRAP AND DECORATIONS.”

MEGAN OSBORNE, EDITOR

SIMPLY HANDSOME

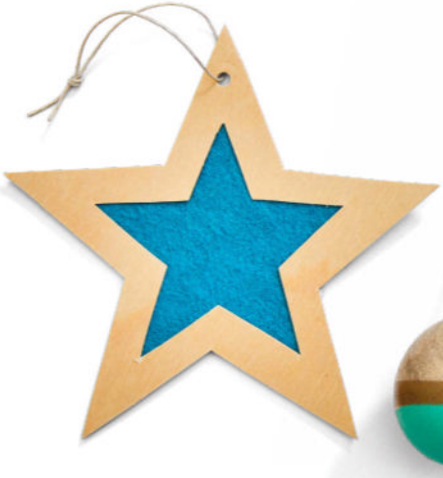
In times past, light towel fabric was sold by the yard so people could cut and sew their own kitchen towels, aprons and other items. You can still find new and vintage versions, often with narrow stripes or checks. That simple cream and red colour combination inspired these clothes-peg ornaments, ribbon-wrapped spools and muslin-covered packages. **Ornament instructions on page 127.**

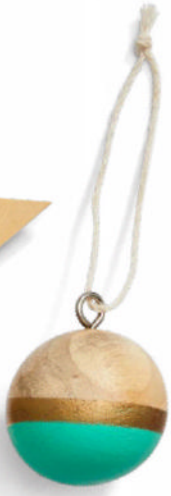
Buy muslin by the metre at fabric stores or dig around in your stash for scraps. More durable than paper, you can use it to wrap presents year after year.

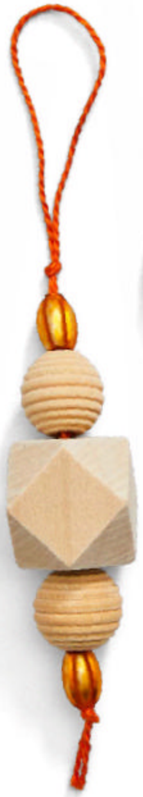


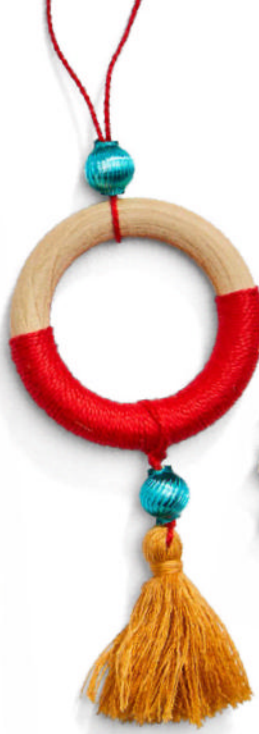
MEMORABLE MUSLIN

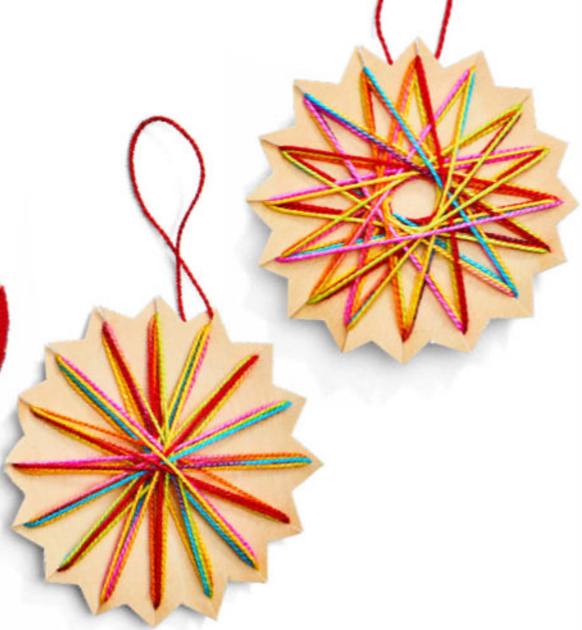
Use humble muslin to make gift bags or wrap boxes. To stiffen the muslin so it acts more like paper, apply some spray-on starch and press with an iron. You can fray an edge and fold the fabric to form a pocket for a card (above). Stamp the recipient's initials directly on the fabric or on a tag. You can secure ribbons with fabric glue, if needed. A balsa wood box topped with a clothes-peg ornament (top right) also fits the homespun theme. **Ornament instructions on page 127.**











STAR BRIGHT

Gather your supplies

- Balsa wood sheet
- Cardstock
- Hobby knife
- Metal straightedge
- Felt scraps
- Quick-setting gel glue
- Mini hole punch
- String to make loop

Here's how

STEP 1 Trace pattern (opposite) onto cardstock to make a template. Cut out template. Trace around template onto balsa wood, then cut out shape. Cut out interior star from exterior star as indicated on pattern.

STEP 2 Trace and cut out an interior star from the felt. Glue the felt star to one side of the interior star. Place exterior star cutout on top. Glue all pieces together and let dry. Cut through all layers following outline on top exterior star. Erase any pencil marks.

STEP 3 Punch a hole through the ornament. Thread string through the hole, then knot ends to make a hanging loop.

NORDIC NICETIES

Gather your supplies

- 5cm unfinished wooden balls
- Painter's tape
- Acrylic paint in metallic and colours
- Foam brush
- Drill and drill bit
- Screw eyes
- Narrow ribbon or cord

Here's how

STEP 1 Use painter's tape to mask areas of the balls you don't want to paint.

STEP 2 Use a foam brush to paint balls with one or two coats of acrylic paint. Let dry after each coat. Remove tape. To add stripe, mask, then paint with metallic paint.

STEP 3 Drill a small hole at the top of each ball. Insert a screw eye. Thread a length of ribbon or cord through the screw eye, then knot ends for a hanging loop.

WOODS & STRINGS

Gather your supplies

- Natural wooden rings (curtain rings are fine)
- Size 5 crochet cotton thread (or use 3 ply or 4 ply yarn)
- Quick-setting gel glue
- Needle
- Tassel (ours is from a decorative trim)
- Decorative beads

Here's how

Ring ornament

STEP 1 Glue one end of a length of crochet cotton to the wooden ring and let dry. Wrap the crochet cotton around the ring's bottom half. Trim cotton and glue end to ring.

STEP 2 Thread needle with a short length of crochet cotton. Run needle through the top of the tassel. Knot crochet cotton over tassel.

STEP 3 Thread a bead onto the knotted crochet cotton. Tie a knot over the bead to secure it. Loop the cotton around the bottom of the ring and knot. Trim excess.

STEP 4 Thread a length of crochet cotton through the ring and knot it around the top of the ring. Thread a bead over the cotton, then tie a knot over the bead. Knot ends of thread to make a hanging loop.

Bead ornament

STEP 1 Thread needle with crochet cotton. Starting with the bottom bead, thread beads onto cotton.

STEP 2 When the top bead is in place, make a 7.5cm loop with the cotton to form a hanging loop. Pinch and hold the loop near the top bead. Run the needle back down through the holes in the beads.

STEP 3 Knot the looped cotton just above the top bead. Knot the cotton beneath the bottom bead, then trim the thread.

A STAR IS BORN

Gather your supplies

- Balsa wood sheet
- Cardstock
- Hobby knife
- Metal straightedge
- Size 5 crochet cotton in variegated colour
- Cord to make loop

Here's how

STEP 1 Trace pattern (below) onto cardstock to make a template. Trace template onto balsa wood and cut out. Cut a small slit at each star point.
STEP 2 Tape an end of crochet cotton on one side of the ornament and wrap the thread around the shape, hooking the thread into the slit at each star point and zigzagging across the ornament. Both designs use the same wrap; one starts with the cotton thread on the back, the other starts with it on the front.
STEP 3 Tie off and trim cotton when you're happy with the wrapped pattern.
STEP 4 Thread a length of cord under some wrapped cotton threads, then knot ends for a hanging loop.

SIMPLY HANDSOME

Gather your supplies

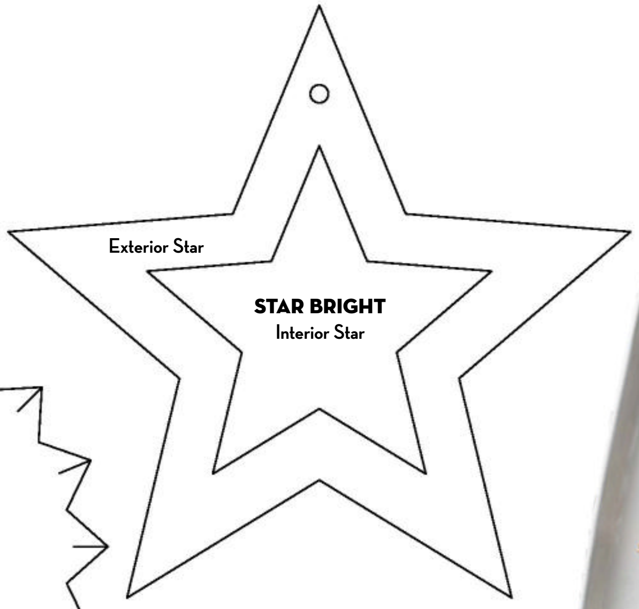
- New or vintage wooden spools
- Ribbon scraps
- Fabric glue and quick-setting gel glue
- Narrow ribbon
- Clothes pegs in large, medium or mini sizes
- String or ribbon

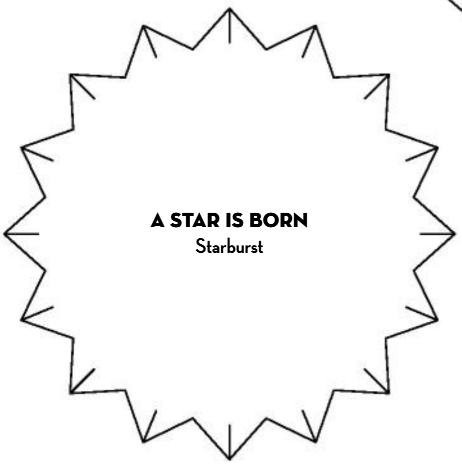
Here's how

Spool ornament
STEP 1 Cut the ribbon long enough to wrap around the spool. Dab fabric glue on the ribbon, focusing on the ends. Wrap around spool, overlapping at ends. Let dry.
STEP 2 To make a hanging loop, cut a length of narrow ribbon long enough to thread through the spool and leave a loop. Thread both ends through the spool. Knot ends under the spool. Use a dab of glue to secure.

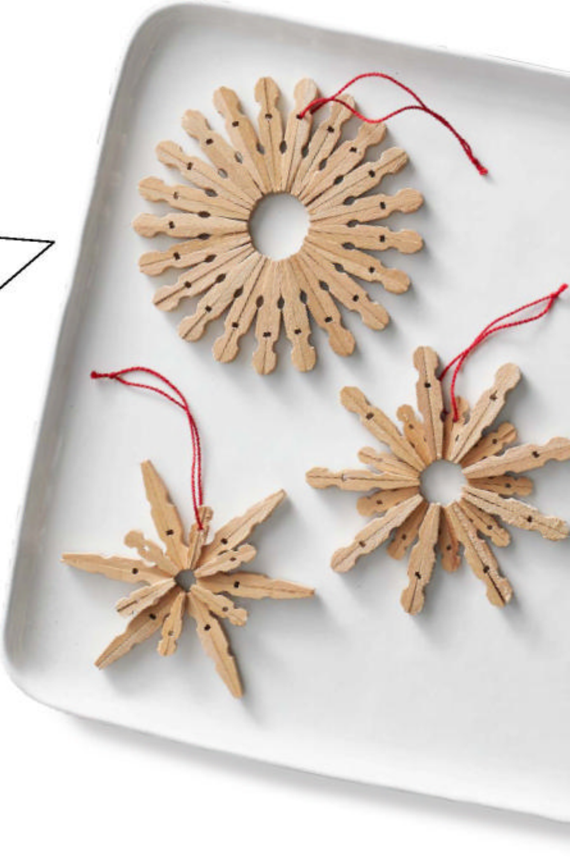
Clothes peg ornament
STEP 1 Remove springs from all clothes pegs.
STEP 2 Glue the two parts of each clothes peg together along the flat sides. Let dry. Referring to photos on pages 124–125 and below, arrange pegs in a snowflake or star shape, making sure edges touch.
STEP 3 Remove one clothes peg and apply glue to both sides. Replace, pressing adjoining clothes pegs against glued edges. Continue around ornament until all clothes pegs are glued together. Let dry.
STEP 4 Thread string through a gap, then knot to form a hanging loop. ■

FOR PROJECT SUPPLIES, SEE STOCKISTS ON PAGE 188.





Enlarge or reduce templates to desired size



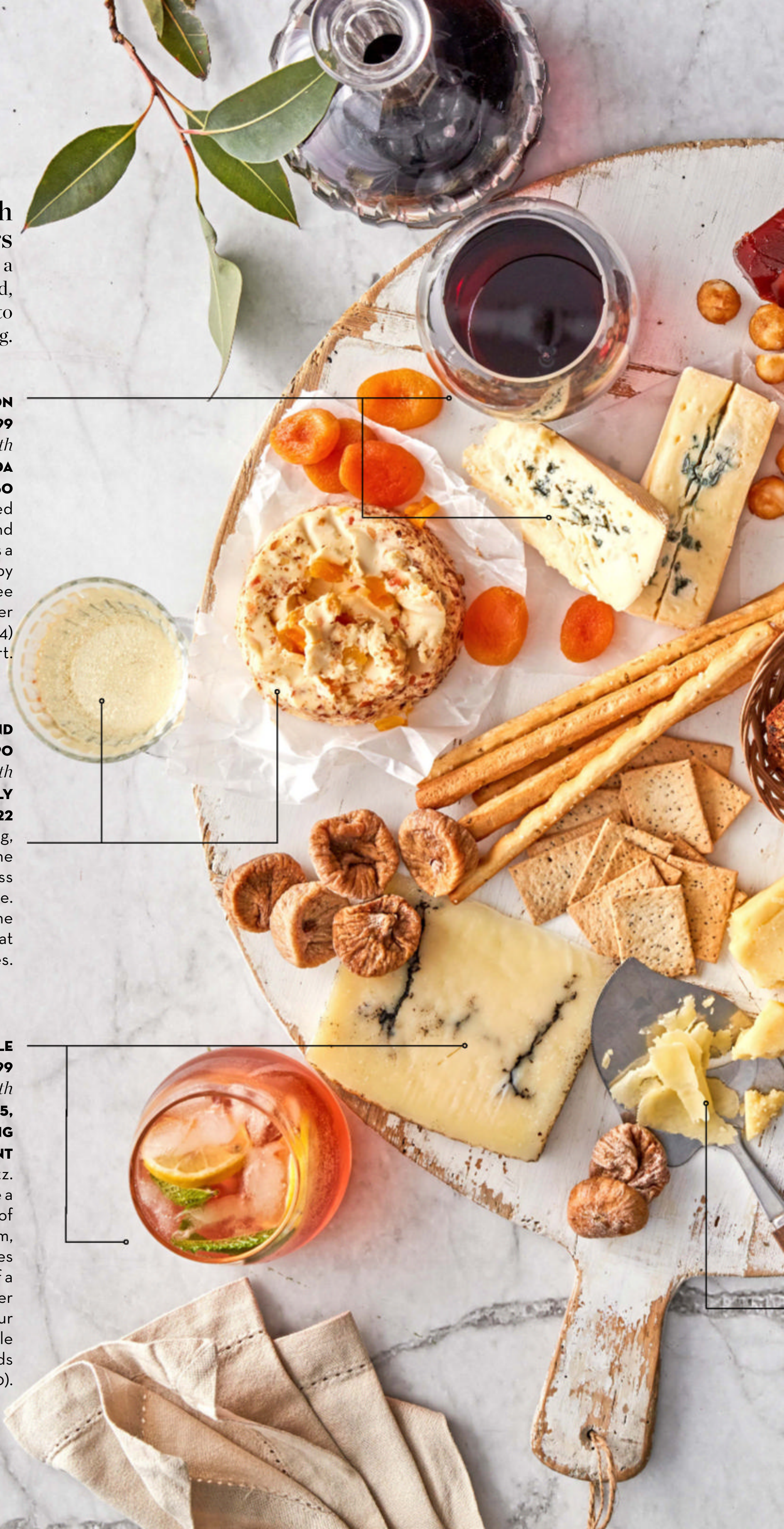
Perfect match

Words MEGAN OSBORNE *Photography* WILL HORNER *Styling* MICHELE CRANSTON

’Tis the season to enjoy a festive tipple. The BHG team tasted 50-plus delicious drinks to find what pairs best with Australia’s favourite dips and cheeses. These combinations will take your festive entertaining to the next level.

Get cheesy with complementary flavours

Wow friends and family with a thoughtfully curated cheeseboard, and a menu of matched wines to make your dairy divas sing.



ALDI EMPORIUM SELECTION SMOOTH BLUE VEIN CHEESE, $5.99
paired with
CHATEAU TANUNDA OLD VINE SHIRAZ 2023, $50
There's nothing like a bold Barossa red to hold its own against a strong, salty and pungent blue cheese. This match was a clear winner, but was closely followed by the House of Arras Brut Elite NV Cuvee 1801 ($68), or a sweet Tussock Jumper Pedro Ximenez Jerez Xeres Sherry ($34) if enjoying this cheese as a dessert.

SOUTH CAPE CREAM CHEESE APRICOT AND ALMOND WITH SWEET PAPAYA, $5.90
paired with
REVINO: POSTCARDS FROM ITALY PROSECCO DOC ORGANIC, $22
For a surprising standout pairing, the floral, citrus and mint notes of the prosecco help lift the heavy creaminess of cheese and lure you back for more. The organic prosecco was also one of our crowd favourites, especially at only $22 a bottle from Coles.

THOMAS DUX SPANISH TRUFFLE SHEEP'S CHEESE, $8.99
paired with
TANICA AUSTRALIAN APERITIF, $55, IN A SYDNEY SPRITZ WITH SPARKLING WINE, SODA, LEMON AND MINT
Wow! Move over Aperol spritz. Our drink of the summer is going to be a TANICA Sydney spritz. With notes of strawberry gum and Davidson's plum, this tart, fruity aperitif matches perfectly with the earthy saltiness of a truffle sheep's cheese. If you're after something a little more traditional, our next favourite pick to match the truffle cheese was the 2023 Wente Vineyards Morning Fog Chardonnay ($20).

ALDI EMPORIUM SELECTION DOUBLE CREAM CAMEMBERT, $4.49
paired with
TREAD SOFTLY PROSECCO ROSÉ, $15.99
A classic choice for a cheeseboard, a camembert or creamy brie needs something light and playful to let the flavours linger. This pale pink prosecco brings fresh pear and subtle spice to the pairing, plus it's naturally lower in alcohol. If you like something a bit oakier and rounder, Taylor's Wines Jaraman Chardonnay ($26) also went down a treat with the camembert.

JACQUIN GOAT CHEESE WITH GARLIC AND HERBS, $7.90
paired with
LOWE VERMENTINO 2025 MUDGEE, $42
This punchy, salty goat's cheese goes really well with the aromatic but soft taste of the Lowe Vermentino. Winemaker David Lowe recommends throwing an ice cube or two into the wine for fresh, summer enjoyment.

MAGGIE BEER VINTAGE CLUB CHEDDAR AGED 12+ MONTHS, $7.20
paired with
ALDI ONE ROAD SOUTH AUSTRALIA AND HEATHCOTE SHIRAZ, $7.99
It was a close battle between two reds to find the best match for this moreish aged cheddar. Either way you need something bold, raisiny and full of guts. The ALDI fan fave came out just on top, but the close second was the Lowe Block 9 Zinfandel 2023 ($45).

Cheers to chips and dip

While wine and cheese pairings might be the traditional route, a dips and chips board has never gone out of style. So, pick some drinks that pair perfectly with a few of Australia's much-loved favourite snacks.

ALDI DELI ORIGINALS FRESH FRENCH ONION DIP, $2.39, AND ALWAYS FRESH GRISSINI ROSEMARY & SEA SALT, $4
paired with
ATIRU NEW ZEALAND PINOT GRIS, $10
Aussies love a French onion dip. The saltiness and can't-stop-won't-stop flavour needs something bright and crisp to cut through it. You can't go wrong with this affordable pinot gris, which is light as a feather.

FRESH GUACAMOLE AND CORN CHIPS
paired with
HANDPICKED TRIAL BATCH RIESLING 2025, $39
If you like a bit of citrus and heat in your guac, then you need an acidic wine with citrus notes to match, The balancing honeysuckle in this riesling is a real winner with zesty avo. An Aperol spritz was the second favourite pairing.

DELI ORIGINALS FRESH MEDITERRANEAN STYLE DIP OLIVE, $2.69
paired with
CAMPARI NEGRONI, $50
Wowzer! The briny, bitter saltiness from the olive dip marries wonderfully with the sweet vermouth of this premix negroni. You could equally serve it with a fresh homemade negroni, and we have a sneaking suspicion it would also be fantastic with a dirty martini.

PHILADELPHIA SWEET CHILLI CREAM CHEESE, $4.50, AND LAVOSH CRACKERS
paired with
TOPPER'S MOUNTAIN FINDER GEWÜRZTRAMINER 2023, $37
Like attracts like, and the sweetness of the cream cheese and sweet chilli Philly is the perfect dancing partner to a soft, rounded, sweet gewürz. The lavosh's simplicity is needed to balance out all the delicious richness!

MONJAY MEZZA TZATZIKI DIP, $4.29, WITH RED ROCK DELI POTATO CHIPS SEA SALT NATURAL, $6
paired with
BIRD IN HAND PINOT GRIGIO 2025, $35
Refreshingly crisp pear and lime notes of this Adelaide Hills pinot grigio offer a nice counterbalance to the saltiness of potato chips and garlic intensity of the tzatziki. Fresh and zesty, it would also go great with seafood. Close your eyes and you could be enjoying your sips and snacks on a coastal stretch of a Greek island.

OBELA HOMMUS DIP WITH PISTACHIO LEMON DUKKAH, $5.50, AND CRUDITÉS
paired with
ROSEBLOOD D'ESTOUBLON ROSÉ, $45
There's nothing like a generous platter of vegie crudités and hommus to hit the spot. Paired with this French rosé, it was extremely popular! The wine worked nicely with the crunchy freshness of the vegies – including the peppery radish – and the pistachio and lemon of the Obela Hommus Dip. ■

better cooking

[SARAH MURPHY SHARES FOODIE NEWS, PRODUCTS AND TRENDS.]

SCAN ME
Scan this QR code to shop these items.

PLATE MAKERS!

Lay a Christmas table as festive as your food with Corelle's Winter Berries 12-piece dinnerware set (bowls, dinner plates and side plates). A wreath of holly rings the plates and bowls have a delicate red accent, $139.

LOCK IT IN

Freeze your food with confidence with Ziploc Freezer Bags. They're thick and durable to prevent freezer burn, with a reliable double-zipper seal. It's a great tool for preventing food waste.

Whisky business

Tasmanian distillery Callington Mill has released its popular Festive Cask Single Malt Whisky, $165, for this year. The 700ml bottle comes with a whisky-soaked pudding. Be quick, it sells fast!

FAB FRIDGE

You can see inside the Hisense 615-litre PureView French Door Fridge, $3999, without opening the door, preserving energy and cool air. And its touchscreen keeps you informed and in control. Find it at JB Hi-Fi and The Good Guys.

THE ULTIMATE APPLIANCE

Ask Santa for an Optimum Thermocook Pro M 3.0 this year! The all-in-one kitchen appliance has a 3-litre bowl, 2400W motor, built-in scales, and a free recipe library; $1400 (7-inch touchscreen), $1600 (10-inch touchscreen, shown). ■

Prices are approximate and a guide only.

THERE IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR QUALITY®
ARNOTT'S™
THE COOKBOOK
Malt'o'Milk
ARNOTT'S SCOTCH
PROUDLY IN COLLABORATION WITH THE AUSTRALIAN Women's Weekly

ON SALE NOW!

ONLY $24.99

Create delicious moments with Arnott's The Cookbook. Get your copy now.

amazon BIGW booktopia DYMOCKS Kmart Target QBD BOOKS

dinner for one

Delicious everyday ideas for when you're dining solo. *Photography* TIM ROBERTS *Styling* MICHELE CRANSTON

CHARGRILLED PRAWN AND CAULIFLOWER SALAD

Preparation time 15 mins
Cooking time 15 mins
Serves 1

¼ cauliflower, cut into 3 wedges
1 tablespoon olive oil
2 teaspoons ground sumac
1 teaspoon Baharat spice blend (or Lebanese seven spice blend)
½ teaspoon sweet paprika
6 medium green prawns, peeled, deveined, tails intact
2 tablespoons baba ganoush
1 tablespoon Greek-style yoghurt
1 tablespoon lemon juice
100g seedless watermelon, skin removed, thin slices
¼ cup mint leaves
¼ red onion, thinly sliced

STEP 1 Blanch cauliflower for 4–5 minutes in a saucepan of boiling salted water. Drain, refresh under cold water, then transfer to a bowl.

STEP 2 In a small bowl, combine oil, sumac, Baharat spice blend and paprika. Toss half the spice mixture through the cauliflower.

STEP 3 Preheat a chargrill plate or barbecue on high heat. Chargrill cauliflower for 3–4 minutes each side or until tender and grill marks appear. Set aside. Toss prawns with remaining spice mixture, then chargrill for 2–3 minutes until cooked through.

STEP 4 Make a dressing by combining the baba ganoush, yoghurt and lemon juice. In a bowl, mix the cauliflower, prawns, watermelon, mint and onion. Serve with baba ganoush dressing. ■

Food preparation Mel Burge

GET ACCESS TO

Better Homes and Gardens.

ON YOUR DEVICE

DECEMBER 2025
Better Homes and Gardens
TV SHOW 7 TURN US ON!
Classic Christmas cookies
PLUS vintage cake decorating and timeless festive feasts
Create with joy & heart
Flower embroidery, Geneva's shelf display and BHG recipes through the years
217+ creative nods to nostalgia
MAKE RETRO RIBS AND FISH PIE WITH MATT MORAN ▸
GROW COTTAGE GARDEN HERITAGE BLOOMS ▸
5:09
Better Homes
Home
Print Editions
My Library
More

Green lovers rejoice, Kmart's new year Living range is here
14 hours ago

How to stop birds from flying into windows
Sadly, a bird colliding...
15 hours ago

15 pork mince recipes you'll want to make again and again
16 hours ago

How to make your own strawberry tower
Gather your supplies
Feb 2

SUBSCRIBER BENEFITS:

- Get **13 issues** of *Better Homes and Gardens* and **digital access** from $24.99 via auto renewal*
- Read or listen to each issue in multiple languages and font sizes
- Access more content, anytime, anywhere!

Download on the App Store

GET IT ON Google Play

SAVE 52%

SUBSCRIBE TODAY

magshop.com.au/DIGITALBHG

136 116 and quote X252BHG

Terms & Conditions: Savings based on digital edition single issue price of $3.99. Offer available from 01/02/2025 to 31/01/2026. Apple digital subscriptions requires iOS 15 or higher. Our Privacy Policy can be found at aremedia.com.au/privacy and includes important information about our collection, use and disclosure of your personal information (including the provision of targeted advertising based on your online activities). It explains that if you do not provide us with information we have requested from you, we may not be able to provide you with the goods and services you require. It also explains how you can access or seek correction of your personal information, how you can complain about a breach of the Australian Privacy Principles and how we will deal with a complaint of that nature. Subscription auto-renews every 12 months at $24.99. Your subscription is subject to continued auto-renewal. Your credit card will continue to be charged as per the above rate and term unless you cancel, and is subject to any price increases notified to you in accordance with the Magshop terms and conditions. For full Magshop terms and conditions including auto-renewal payment plan terms, please visit magshop.com.au/terms

GOOD Gravy

Here's how to get your gravy thick, silky and scrumptious every time. Pour on the praise!

TOO THIN?

If your gravy is runny, you can simmer it longer to thicken, but if it's go time and it still looks watery, there's a faster fix. In a small bowl, combine 1 tablespoon cornflour with 2 tablespoons room temperature water and stir until combined. Stir into the hot gravy, then cook until thickened.

LUMPY?

Lumps form in gravy when flour added to hot liquid sticks to itself and forms small dry pouches that no amount of whisking seems to break up. You can put it through a strainer, but an even easier solution is to use a stick blender to smooth things out – right in the saucepan. Another option is to give it a quick whirr in a regular blender. (Only fill the blender a third of the way, vent the top and cover with a tea towel to catch any hot splatter.)

SPLIT?

If your gravy looks curdled or has an oily top layer, it's likely that the emulsion of flour and fat that thickens the mixture has split or broken. Fix it by adding a splash or two of warm water and whisking vigorously to restore the balance of liquid and fat.

BORING?

Underseasoned stock can sometimes make a gravy that tastes flat. Vegemite is a good secret ingredient as a tiny teaspoon packs meaty deliciousness, even in vegetarian gravies. Another option is a splash of soy sauce.

Base recipes

ONE GREAT GRAVY

Preparation time 5 mins
Cooking time 10 mins
Makes about 2 cups

Stir 1 cup chicken stock into the pan with the drippings from a roast turkey, scraping up any browned bits from the bottom of the pan. Pour mixture into a 2-cup glass measuring cup. Skim and reserve fat. If necessary, add enough melted butter to the reserved fat to make ¼ cup. Add enough additional stock to make 2 cups total liquid. Pour ¼ cup fat into a medium saucepan (discard any remaining fat). Whisk in ¼ cup plain flour and season. Stir until smooth. Add stock mixture all at once to the saucepan, stirring until smooth. Cook and stir over medium heat until thickened and bubbly. Season.

EASY MAKE-AHEAD GRAVY

Preparation time 5 mins
Cooking time 10 mins
Makes about 2 cups

Heat ¼ cup vegetable oil in a saucepan over medium heat. Whisk in ¼ cup plain flour and season. Add 2 cups chicken stock all at once to the saucepan, stirring until smooth. Cook and stir until thickened and bubbly. Store in an airtight container in the fridge for up to 3 days.

Gravy mix-ins

Customise your gravy by adding any of the following:

SOMETHING RICH
Creamy herbed or blue cheese.

SOMETHING GREEN
Finely chopped herbs such as rosemary, sage, parsley, chives or thyme.

SOMETHING EARTHY
Sautéed mushrooms, shallots or slivered dried tomatoes.

SOMETHING BRIGHT
Balsamic glaze, wholegrain mustard or a dash of apple cider vinegar. ■

Nuts about BRITTLE

Turn your kitchen into a lolly shop with this crackin' brittle.

Photography DERA BURRESON
Styling GREG LUNA

NUT BRITTLE

Preparation time 20 mins
Cooking time 35 mins
Makes About 20 pieces

1 cup unsalted roasted peanuts (or cashews, almonds or pepitas)
2½ cups caster sugar
½ cup water
50g unsalted butter, chopped

STEP 1 Line an 18cm x 28cm slice pan with foil. Spread nuts over the base. Place the tray on a wire cooling rack.
STEP 2 Combine sugar and water in a stainless-steel saucepan. Stir over low heat until the sugar dissolves, then bring to the boil on medium heat. Simmer for 25 minutes, until it's a rich golden colour, swirling occasionally (do not stir) and brushing the sides of the saucepan with a pastry brush dipped in water.
STEP 3 Remove pan from heat and stir in the butter with a wooden spoon until just combined.
STEP 4 Quickly pour the toffee mixture into the prepared pan (it won't fill it completely). Set aside in a cool place (do not refrigerate) until the toffee sets.
STEP 5 Break the brittle into pieces and store in an airtight container lined with greaseproof or baking paper.

USE THE RIGHT PAN

Choose a heavy-based saucepan for even heating and caramelising. Using a stainless-steel pan (instead of a non-stick pan with a dark-coloured coating) lets you see more easily the mixture changing colour.

STIR STEPS

Stirring the mixture while the sugar dissolves is important, but once the sugar has completely dissolved and it's come to the boil, do not stir it. If you notice the mixture colouring in one area of the pan more than others, gently swirl the pan to help redistribute the sugar.

BRUSH BRILLIANCE

Have a small jug of water and a pastry brush next to your cooktop to brush down the sides of the pan during cooking. This will move any of the sugar mixture that sticks to the side of the pan. If you leave it, it will burn.

HOT STUFF

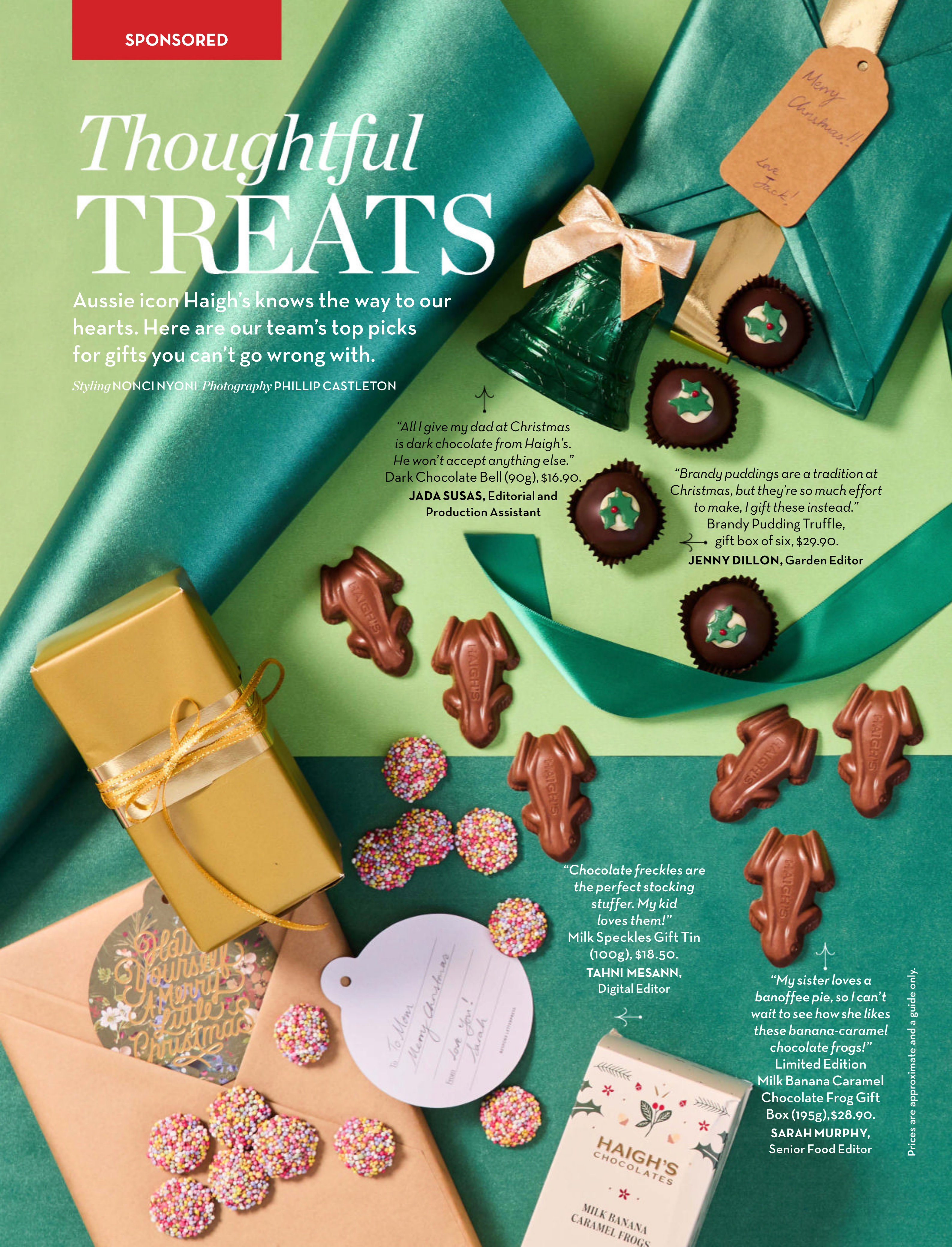
The brittle mixture is very hot and will heat up your tray when you pour it in. Placing the tray on a wire rack will avoid damaging your kitchen benchtop when the tray heats up quickly. ■

SPONSORED

Thoughtful TREATS

Aussie icon Haigh's knows the way to our hearts. Here are our team's top picks for gifts you can't go wrong with.

Styling NONCI NYONI *Photography* PHILLIP CASTLETON


Merry Christmas!!
Love Jack!
HAIGH'S
Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas
To Mom
Merry Christmas
from Love you!
Sarah
HAIGH'S CHOCOLATES
MILK BANANA CARAMEL FROGS

"All I give my dad at Christmas is dark chocolate from Haigh's. He won't accept anything else."
Dark Chocolate Bell (90g), $16.90.
JADA SUSAS, Editorial and Production Assistant

"Brandy puddings are a tradition at Christmas, but they're so much effort to make, I gift these instead."
Brandy Pudding Truffle, gift box of six, $29.90.
JENNY DILLON, Garden Editor

"Chocolate freckles are the perfect stocking stuffer. My kid loves them!"
Milk Speckles Gift Tin (100g), $18.50.
TAHNI MESANN, Digital Editor

"My sister loves a banoffee pie, so I can't wait to see how she likes these banana-caramel chocolate frogs!"
Limited Edition Milk Banana Caramel Chocolate Frog Gift Box (195g), $28.90.
SARAH MURPHY, Senior Food Editor

Prices are approximate and a guide only.

HAIGH'S
CHOCOLATES
TRUFFLE SELECTION
NET 150g
HAIGH'S
CHOCOLATES
DARK CHERRY
CHOCS

GIFT WRAPPING IDEA

Decorative paper folds elevate your gift wrapping, and thicker paper leads to better results. For instructions, go to bhg.com.au/how-to-wrap-christmas-presents

"Nothing but the best for my partner. The truffles are a favourite in our house. I'm just glad he shares!"
Opulent Truffle Gift Box (150g), $44.90.
SCOTT CASSIDY, Creative Director

"My dad goes mad for anything chocolate, and the baubles from Haigh's can't be beat! One for him, one for me."
Milk Chocolate Baubles Bon Bon (175g), $23.90.
MEGAN OSBORNE, Editor

"The chocolate baubles with the gingerbread plushie is so cute – my nieces and nephews will love it."
Gingerbread Man Toy with Milk Chocolate Baubles (50g), $30.90.
JADE COULL, Senior Content Producer

"That combo of cherries and chocolate was such an incredible treat when I was young. I still love it."
Dark Cherry Chocs Gift Tin (225g), $26.90.
JO MCKINNON, Chief Sub-editor

GIFT WRAPPING IDEA

Create the perfect pouch for irregularly-shaped gifts, then top it with an accordion-fold paper fan and a beautiful double bow to make it extra special! Full instructions at bhg.com.au/how-to-wrap-christmas-presents

SCAN ME

Shop these Haigh's picks and more for your meaningful festive gifting.

gifted

Solve your gifting dilemmas, from finding budget buys or last minute options, to thoughtful ideas for travellers, foodies, or those spending Christmas solo. Happy festive shopping!

Photography PHILLIP CASTLETON *Styling* NONCI NYONI

travel bugs

Thrill travellers with inspired choices from Santa's sack! They won't leave home without them.

The rugged 32-litre Kodiak hard cooler, $389.95, can keep ice solid for up to five days.

The Basil Bangs Weekend umbrella, $199, is pretty and provides UPF50+ sun protection.

Solmates' refillable roll-on applicator, $32.95 for 50ml size, is great for sunscreen on the go.

The durable Kathmandu 20-litre Trailhead backpack, $159.98, is made from recycled nylon.

The Wandering Folk's Flourish picnic rug, $199, is made from recycled canvas.

Nocs Provisions Standard Issue 10x25 binoculars, $179.95, are small but mighty.

SCAN ME
Scan the QR code to shop these products.

THE NORTH FACE
Moka Express
BIALETTI

The North Face x Bialetti set, $250, has a coffee maker, two cups and a tin of coffee.

FIND
YOUR
SELF
JACENTA WILSON
TRAVEL
TRAVEL

Papier's *Find Yourself* travel journal, $64, has space for plans, memories and more.

Pet lovers will adore the colourful Gorman Montage pet bowl, $20 for small size.

Celebrate native trees with the Angus & Celeste Botanic vase in a hanging gum design, $89.

Dine on the iconic Australian House and Garden Esperance dinner set in celadon, $159.95, from Myer.

Cresta earrings by Tania Claire, $129, are a 14k gold-plated tribute to our ocean treasures.

all aussie

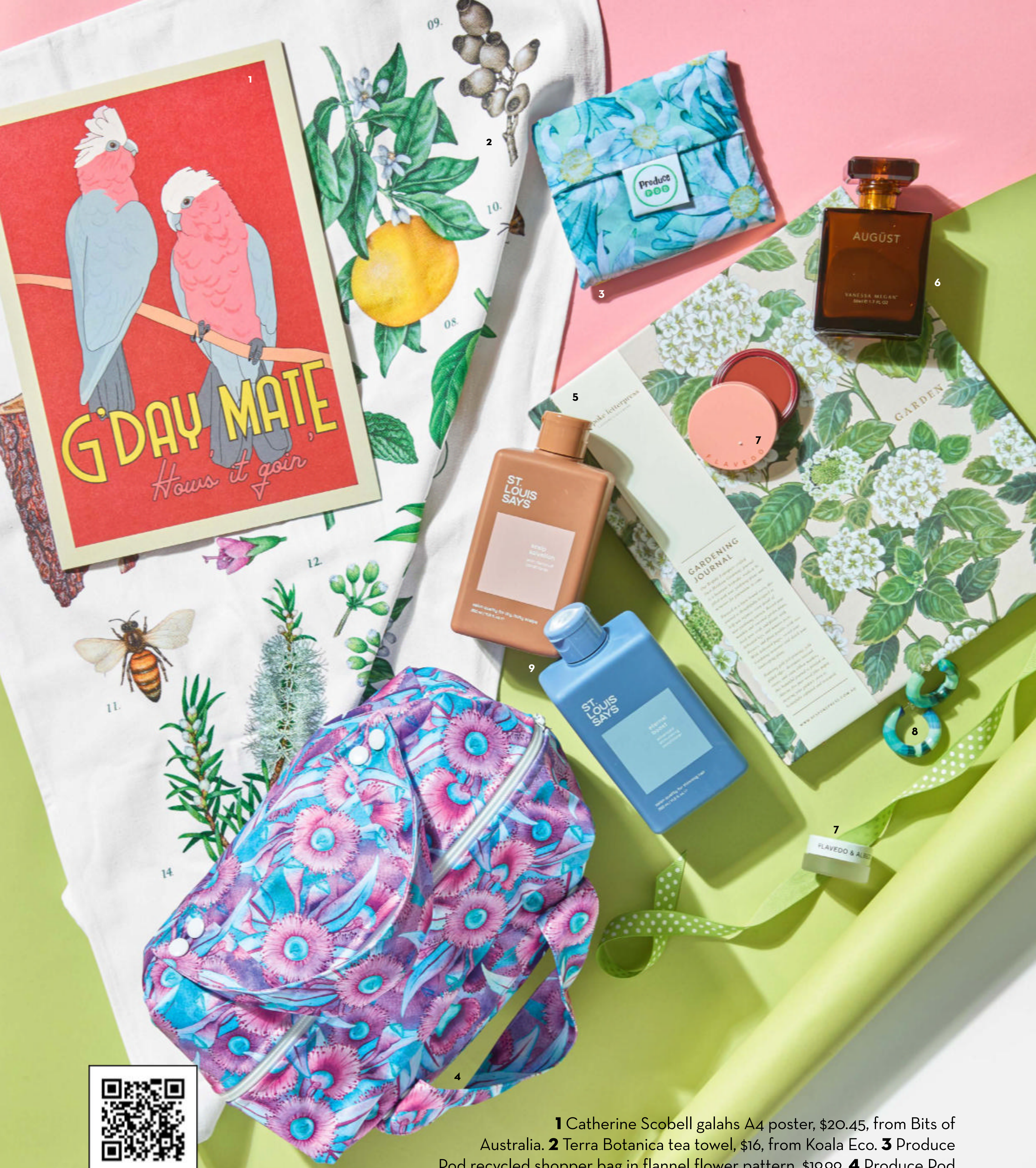
Catch the sunshine, the scents and the colours of our beautiful land with this selection of Aussie-owned brands.

This Koh Living Christmas bauble, $9.95, features artwork by Jacinta-rai Ridgeway-Maahs.

Men will look dapper in the traditional Blundstone #1900 ankle boots, $289.95.

“Adopt” a koala from Koala Conservation Australia, $60, to support its important work.

The Status Anxiety Wayward wallet, $99.95, is made from soft pebble leather.


1
G'DAY MATE,
Hows it goin
09.
2
10.
08.
12.
11.
14.
Produce Pod
3
AUGŪST
VANESSA MEGAN
6
5
ST. LOUIS SAYS
7
FLAVEDO
GARDEN
GARDENING JOURNAL
9
ST. LOUIS SAYS
8
7
FLAVEDO & ALBE
4

SCAN ME
Scan the QR code to shop these products.

1 Catherine Scobell galahs A4 poster, $20.45, from Bits of Australia. **2** Terra Botanica tea towel, $16, from Koala Eco. **3** Produce Pod recycled shopper bag in flannel flower pattern, $19.99. **4** Produce Pod vegie bag for fridge in gum blossom pattern, $46.99. **5** Bespoke Letterpress Heirloom gardening journal, $52.95. **6** Vanessa Megan Augüst natural mood enhancing perfume, 50ml, $89.95. **7** Flavedo & Albedo Dew Tint makeup, $44, and washable forever makeup rounds, $21. **8** Elk Resso hoop earrings, $49. **9** St. Louis Says Scalp Salvation and Eternal Boost conditioners, $27 each.

8
7
6
2
1
Big love
BRAILLE CARD
3
5
4
9

hug in a box

Share warmth and love with someone that might need a little extra at this time of year.

1 Lush Snow Fairy bath bomb, $12. **2** Ginger & Me Mindfulness affirmation cards, $24. **3** Miss Blooms Flower Vintage tea cup candle, $42. **4** Candle Kiosk scented haze candles, $29. **5** Natio Australia Blend essential oil and Australiana Coast Blend essential oil, $24.95 each. **6** Hallmark x Guide Dogs Braille greeting card Big Love, $8. **7** Bands of Courage Great Barrier Turtle bracelet stack, $69. **8** Linen House Ocean City robe, $89.99, from Myer. **9** Natio Rosewater and Magnesium relaxing bath soak, $14.95.

floral street
sweet almond blossom
Vincent

The dreamy Floral Street Sweet Almond Blossom EDP, $141 for 50ml, from Mecca.

Ella Bache Rejuvenating skin collection, $155, has four nourishing products.

RETREAT YOURSELF

The Retreat Yourself box, $115, is like bringing the day spa to your home.

TELL ME MORE
A GAME OF QUESTIONS TO DEEPEN CONNECTION

The Tell Me More game, $36.10, is made to deepen connection with those you love, Amazon.

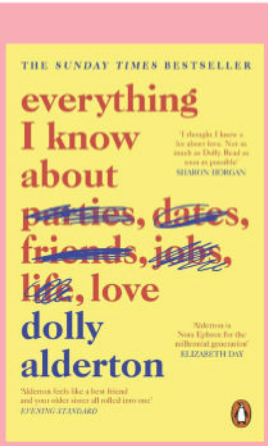
SCAN ME
Scan the QR code to shop these products.

Believe
Manifestation
Journal
Become

Think positive with the Jumble and Co. manifestation journal, $14.99.

FUNDAY
Santa's Sweets

The treats inside the Funday Santa's Sweets bonbon, $10, are gluten free and sweetened with stevia.


THE SUNDAY TIMES BESTSELLER
everything
I know
about
~~parties~~, ~~dates~~,
~~friends~~, ~~jobs~~,
~~life~~, love
dolly
alderton

Gift a cracking read with *Everything I Know About Love* by Dolly Alderton, $26.99.

A classic rotary dial telephone from Amazon, $83.60, is a stylish reminder to stay in touch.

Relax into Australian Shepherd's crossover fluffy slides, $105, from Ugg Express.

Snack outdoors with the Catalina bamboo chip & dip platter, $29.99, from Adairs.

482
ORANGE POP
MAVALA
483
YELLOW POP
MAVALA
484
GREEN POP
MAVALA

Mavala Pop Waves nail polishes, $11.95 each, come in six feelgood bright shades.

The Klara glass vase comes in two pastel designs, $29.95 each, from Bed Bath N' Table.

The Otto Tiny Human with faux trailing plant raises a smile, $17.18, from Officeworks.

under $30

Don't let a limited budget cramp your gifting style. You'll be surprised how good 'affordable' can be.

The Chinoiserie small planter, $29.95, from Bed Bath N' Table, is just waiting for a new plant.

Polymer Clay Kit
CraftKits

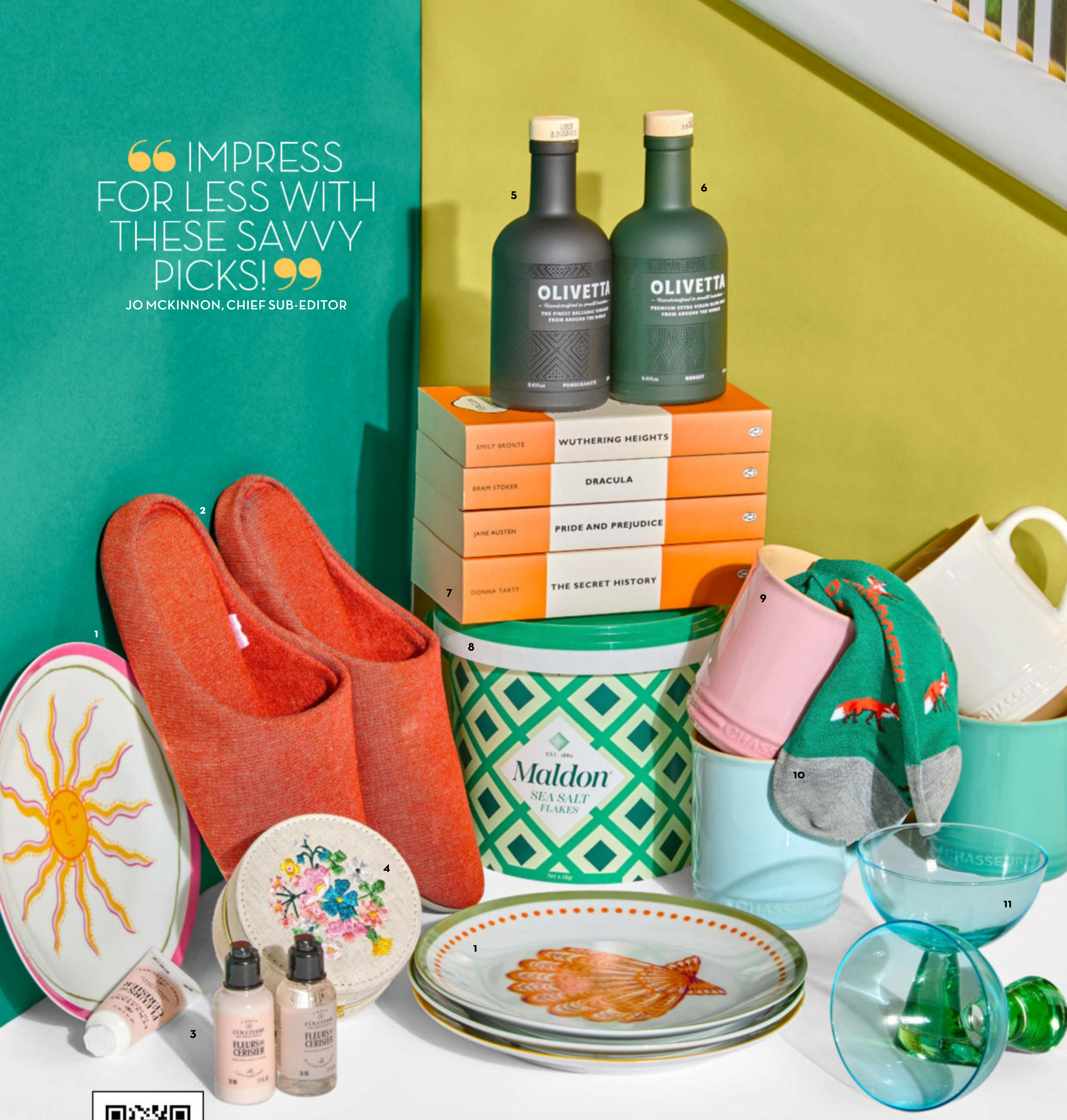
Creative types will love the Hobbycraft polymer clay kit, $12, from Officeworks.

The Tuscany pink and orange stripe round platter, $29.99 from Adairs, is bright and fun.

URBAN JUNGLE
URBAN JUNGLE

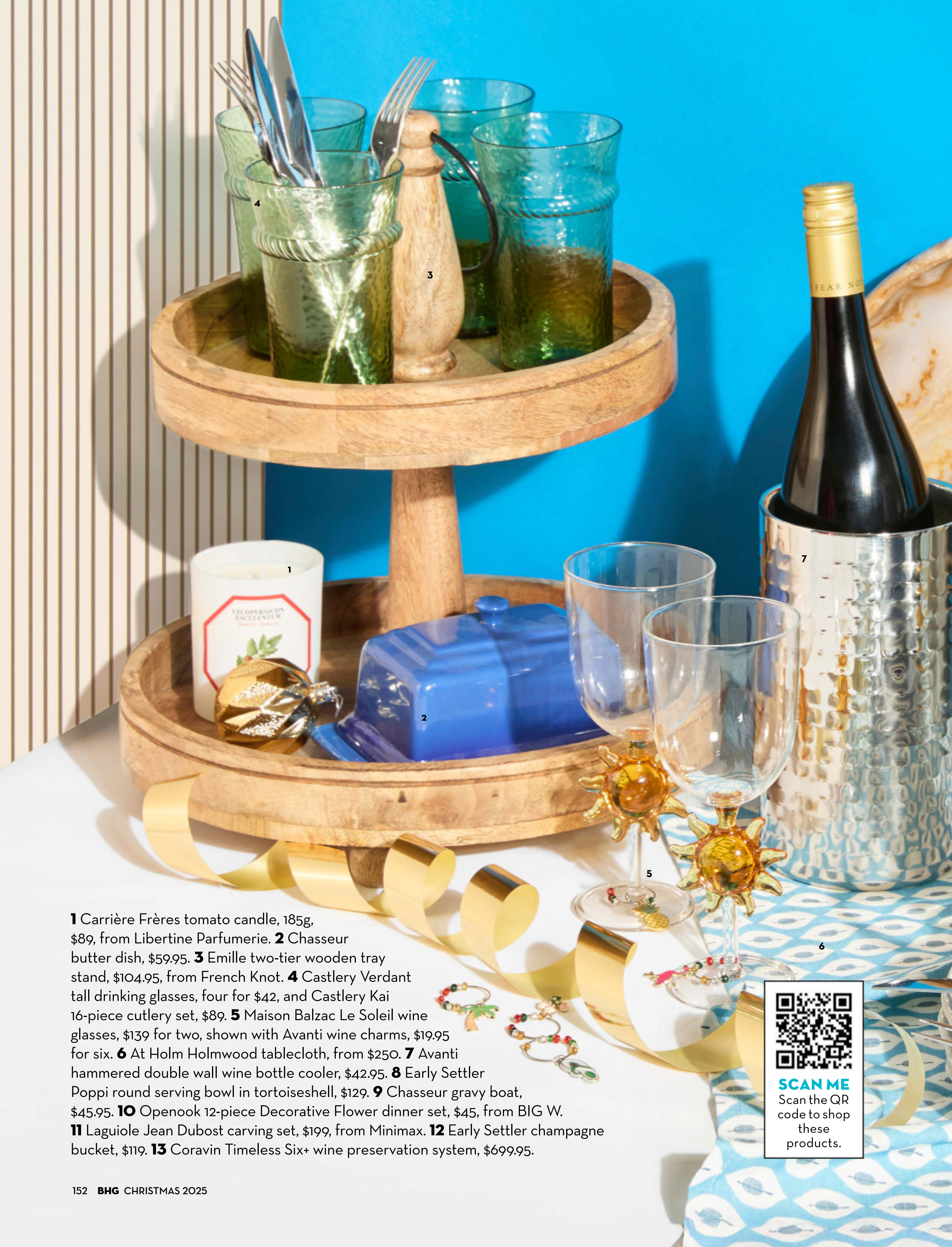
Urban Jungle's Party Pair bonbon, $24, includes a cleansing balm and face cream.

> “IMPRESS FOR LESS WITH THESE SAVVY PICKS!”
>
> JO MCKINNON, CHIEF SUB-EDITOR


5
6
OLIVETTA
OLIVETTA
WUTHERING HEIGHTS
EMILY BRONTE
DRACULA
BRAM STOKER
PRIDE AND PREJUDICE
JANE AUSTEN
THE SECRET HISTORY
DONNA TARTT
7
2
1
8
Maldon
SEA SALT FLAKES
9
10
4
1
11
3
FLEURS DE CERISIER

SCAN ME
Scan the QR for more affordable gifts online.

1 Openook festive side plates, $8 for four, from BIG W. **2** Muji cotton insole slippers in terracotta, $14.95. **3** L’Occitane Fleurs de Cerisier Deluxe Ornament mini trio, $29. **4** Otto accessory case, $17.87, from Officeworks. **5** Olivetta black balsamic vinegar with pomegranate, $27. **6** Olivetta extra virgin olive oil, $28. **7** Penguin books *The Secret History* by Donna Tartt, *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Brontë, *Dracula* by Bram Stoker, *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen, $14.99 each. **8** Maldon sea-salt flakes 1.4kg, $29.99, from Costco. **9** Chasseur Macaron mugs, $30 for four, from Amazon. **10** Bamboozld men’s Foxy bamboo socks, $16.95. **11** Openook coloured cocktail glasses, $15 for two, from BIG W.

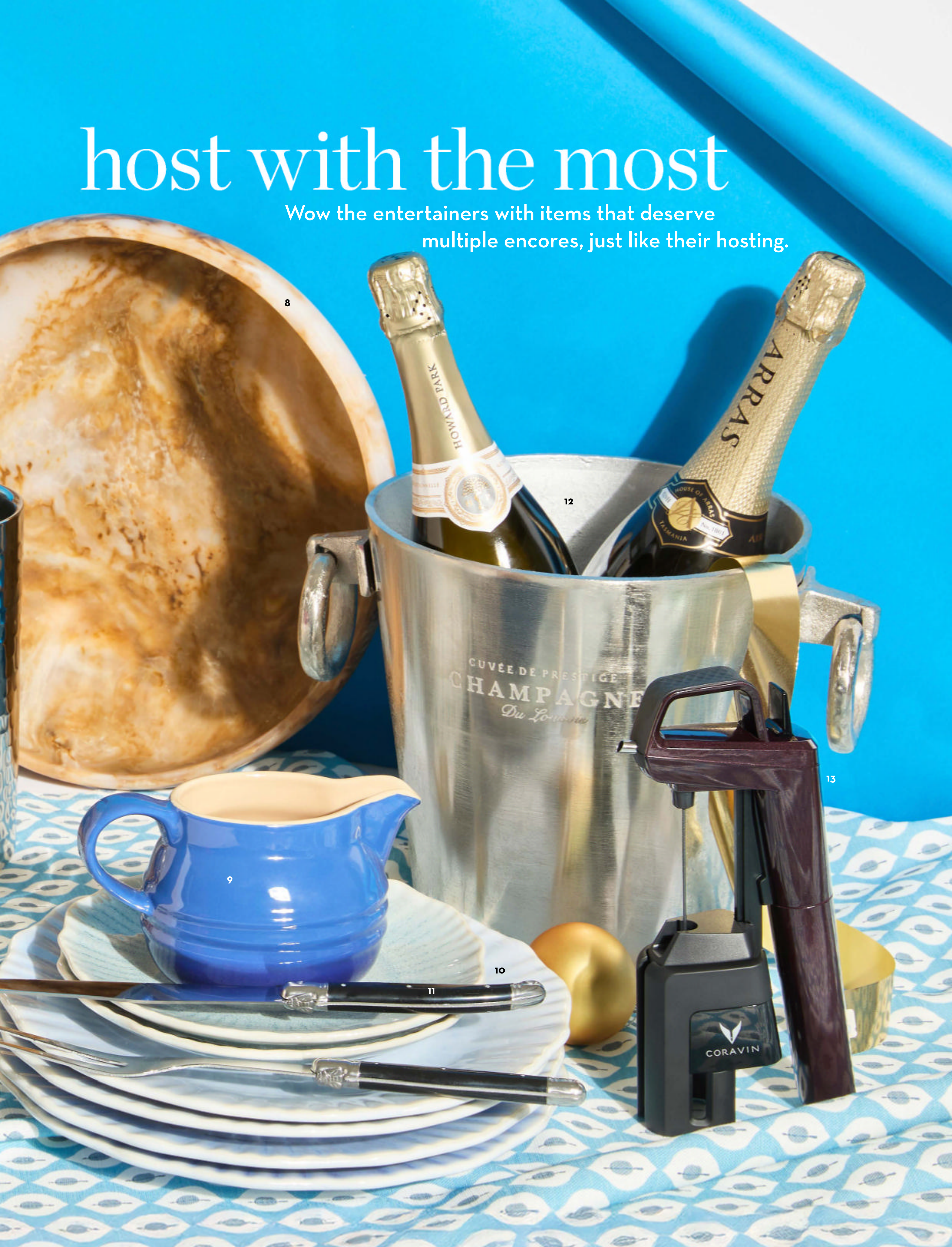


1 Carrière Frères tomato candle, 185g, $89, from Libertine Parfumerie. **2** Chasseur butter dish, $59.95. **3** Emille two-tier wooden tray stand, $104.95, from French Knot. **4** Castlery Verdant tall drinking glasses, four for $42, and Castlery Kai 16-piece cutlery set, $89. **5** Maison Balzac Le Soleil wine glasses, $139 for two, shown with Avanti wine charms, $19.95 for six. **6** At Holm Holmwood tablecloth, from $250. **7** Avanti hammered double wall wine bottle cooler, $42.95. **8** Early Settler Poppi round serving bowl in tortoiseshell, $129. **9** Chasseur gravy boat, $45.95. **10** Openook 12-piece Decorative Flower dinner set, $45, from BIG W. **11** Laguiole Jean Dubost carving set, $199, from Minimax. **12** Early Settler champagne bucket, $119. **13** Coravin Timeless Six+ wine preservation system, $699.95.

SCAN ME
Scan the QR code to shop these products.

host with the most

Wow the entertainers with items that deserve multiple encores, just like their hosting.


8
HOWARD PARK
ARRAS
HOUSE OF ARRAS
TASMANIA
12
CUVÉE DE PRESTIGE
CHAMPAGNE
Du Lorraine
13
9
10
11
CORAVIN

ORANGE FENNEL + THYME
SUGAR BLEND
COFFEE, CACAO + WATTLESEED
SUGAR BLEND

Two Good Co's sugar blend set, $60, comes with a Dinosaur Designs teaspoon.

la dolce vita!

Bring joy to a room with this framed La Dolce Vita print, $74.95 for A3 size, from Olive et Oriel.

Gift the Ninja Swirl by CREAMi, $549.99, for ice-cold treats all summer long.

COOGEE
PAVILION

Get in quick for the White Possum advent calendar, $259, with 25 mini Australian gins.

inner chef

Help your favourite food lover find the inspiration to cook up a storm.

A FISH FOR ALL SEASONS
35 seafood species you need to love more
SYDNEY FISH MARKET

A Fish for All Seasons, $59.95, is by those in the know at Sydney Fish Market.

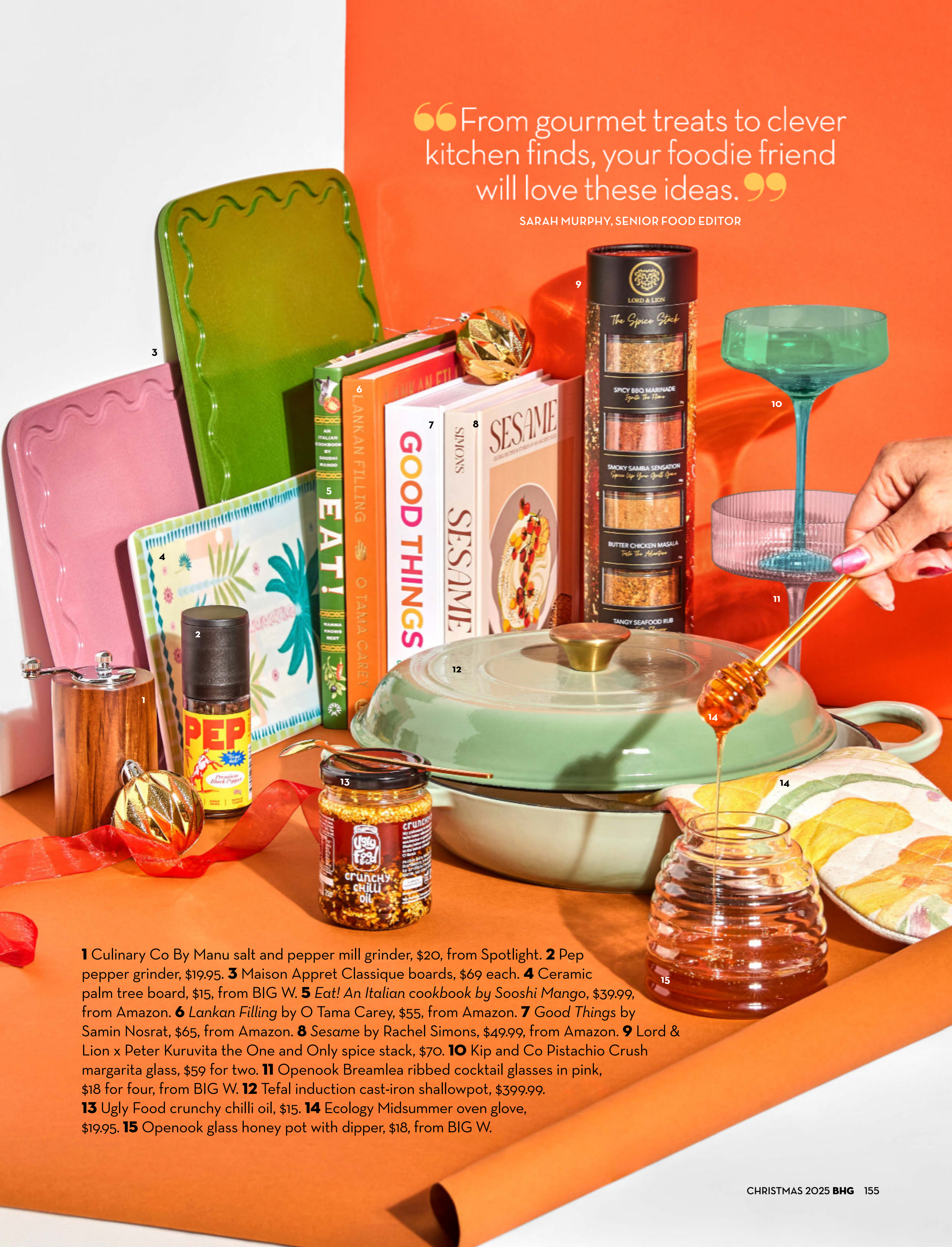
Gewürzhaus
AUSTRALIAN FLAVOURS

The Gewürzhaus Australian flavours pack, $65, includes saltbush, bush herbs and more.

The Tablescaped brasserie set for four, $249, provides instant French charm.

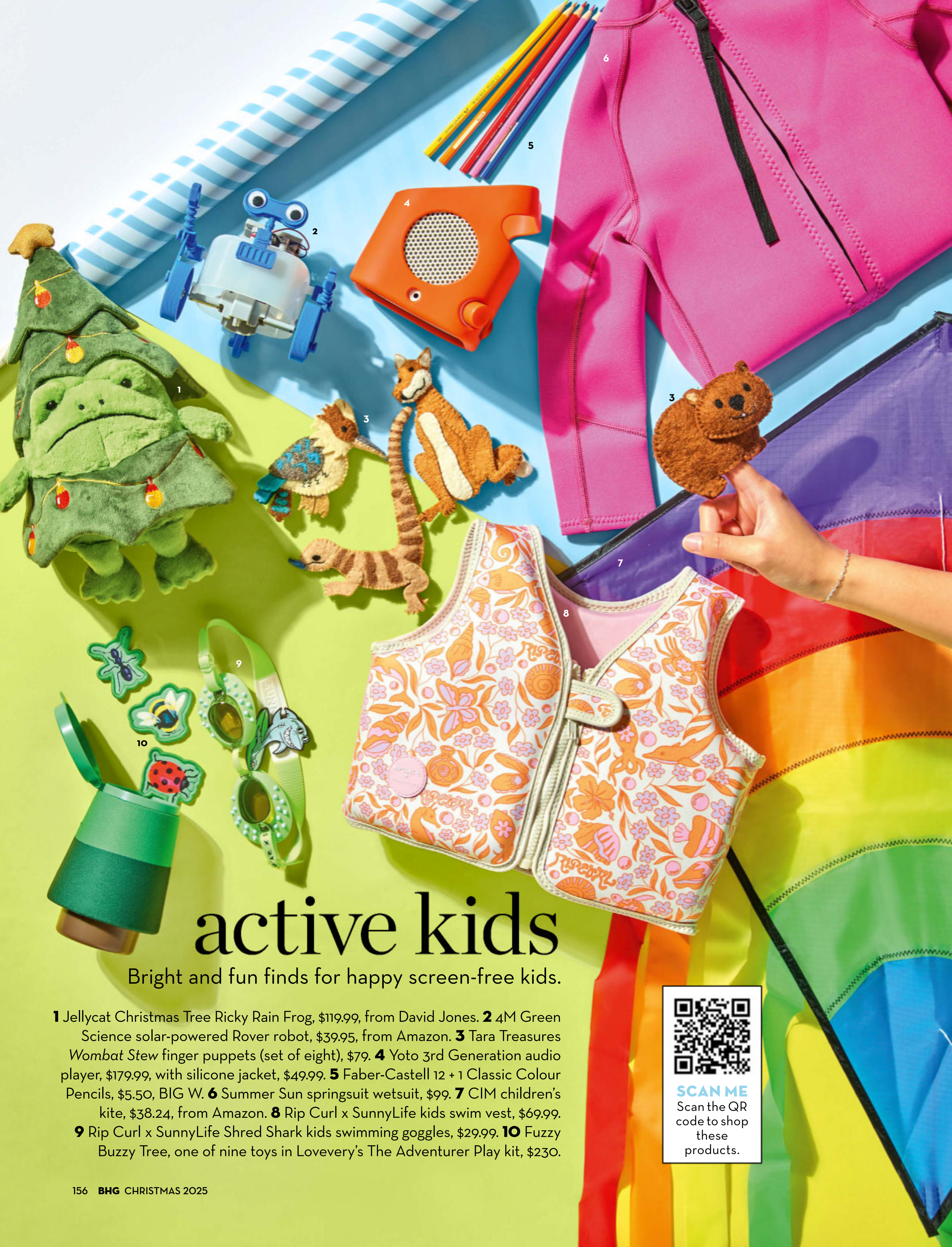
Ooni's Vault 2 electric pizza oven, from $899, will take anyone's pizza game to the next level.

SCAN ME
Scan the QR code to shop these products.



> “From gourmet treats to clever kitchen finds, your foodie friend will love these ideas.”
>
> SARAH MURPHY, SENIOR FOOD EDITOR

1 Culinary Co By Manu salt and pepper mill grinder, $20, from Spotlight. **2** Pep pepper grinder, $19.95. **3** Maison Appret Classique boards, $69 each. **4** Ceramic palm tree board, $15, from BIG W. **5** *Eat! An Italian cookbook by Sooshi Mango*, $39.99, from Amazon. **6** *Lankan Filling* by O Tama Carey, $55, from Amazon. **7** *Good Things* by Samin Nosrat, $65, from Amazon. **8** *Sesame* by Rachel Simons, $49.99, from Amazon. **9** Lord & Lion x Peter Kuruvita the One and Only spice stack, $70. **10** Kip and Co Pistachio Crush margarita glass, $59 for two. **11** Openook Breamlea ribbed cocktail glasses in pink, $18 for four, from BIG W. **12** Tefal induction cast-iron shallowpot, $399.99. **13** Ugly Food crunchy chilli oil, $15. **14** Ecology Midsummer oven glove, $19.95. **15** Openook glass honey pot with dipper, $18, from BIG W.



active kids

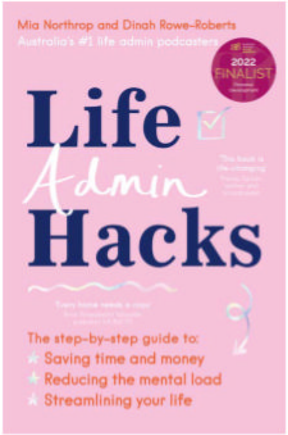
Bright and fun finds for happy screen-free kids.

1 Jellycat Christmas Tree Ricky Rain Frog, $119.99, from David Jones. **2** 4M Green Science solar-powered Rover robot, $39.95, from Amazon. **3** Tara Treasures *Wombat Stew* finger puppets (set of eight), $79. **4** Yoto 3rd Generation audio player, $179.99, with silicone jacket, $49.99. **5** Faber-Castell 12 + 1 Classic Colour Pencils, $5.50, BIG W. **6** Summer Sun springsuit wetsuit, $99. **7** CIM children's kite, $38.24, from Amazon. **8** Rip Curl x SunnyLife kids swim vest, $69.99. **9** Rip Curl x SunnyLife Shred Shark kids swimming goggles, $29.99. **10** Fuzzy Buzzy Tree, one of nine toys in Lovevery's The Adventurer Play kit, $230.

SCAN ME
Scan the QR code to shop these products.

Borrow ebooks directly from the local library with the Kobo Libra Colour, $379.95.

Belkin's SoundForm Isolate noise-cancelling headphones, $89.95, will help them focus.


Mia Northrop and Dinah Rowe-Roberts
Australia's #1 life admin podcasters
2022 FINALIST
Life Admin Hacks
The step-by-step guide to:
Saving time and money
Reducing the mental load
Streamlining your life

The practical *Life Admin Hacks*, $34.99, can help with tips to save time and money.

Prepare for next year with the Bespoke Letterpress 2026 day to a page planner, $52.95.

busy bee

Time-savers to help those in your life who make juggling look like an art form.

Safely charge up to three devices wire-free using Belkin's UltraCharge Pro, $219.95.

Help him stay sharp in a flash with the King C. Gillette Style Master trimmer, $69.

Gift the dog parent a Lyka pet food subscription to save them time shopping and prepping!

SCAN ME
Scan the QR code to shop these products.

Connect the Hoselink auto-fill pet water bowl, $44.90, to a tap for reliable hydration.

Polaroid's Go 2 instant camera, $127, from Officeworks – opt for fast delivery.

The Ultrahuman Air smart ring, $587, tracks health data, and Officeworks offers metro area same-day delivery.

The best gift? A whole year of *Better Homes and Gardens* magazine for just $89.99. See page 4.

Gift a GoodnessMe subscription beauty gift box, $49 a quarter.

last minute

Run out of time? These items offer quick delivery or can be bought with moments to spare.

Find your loved one a pottery class near them with Class Bento so they can get creative.

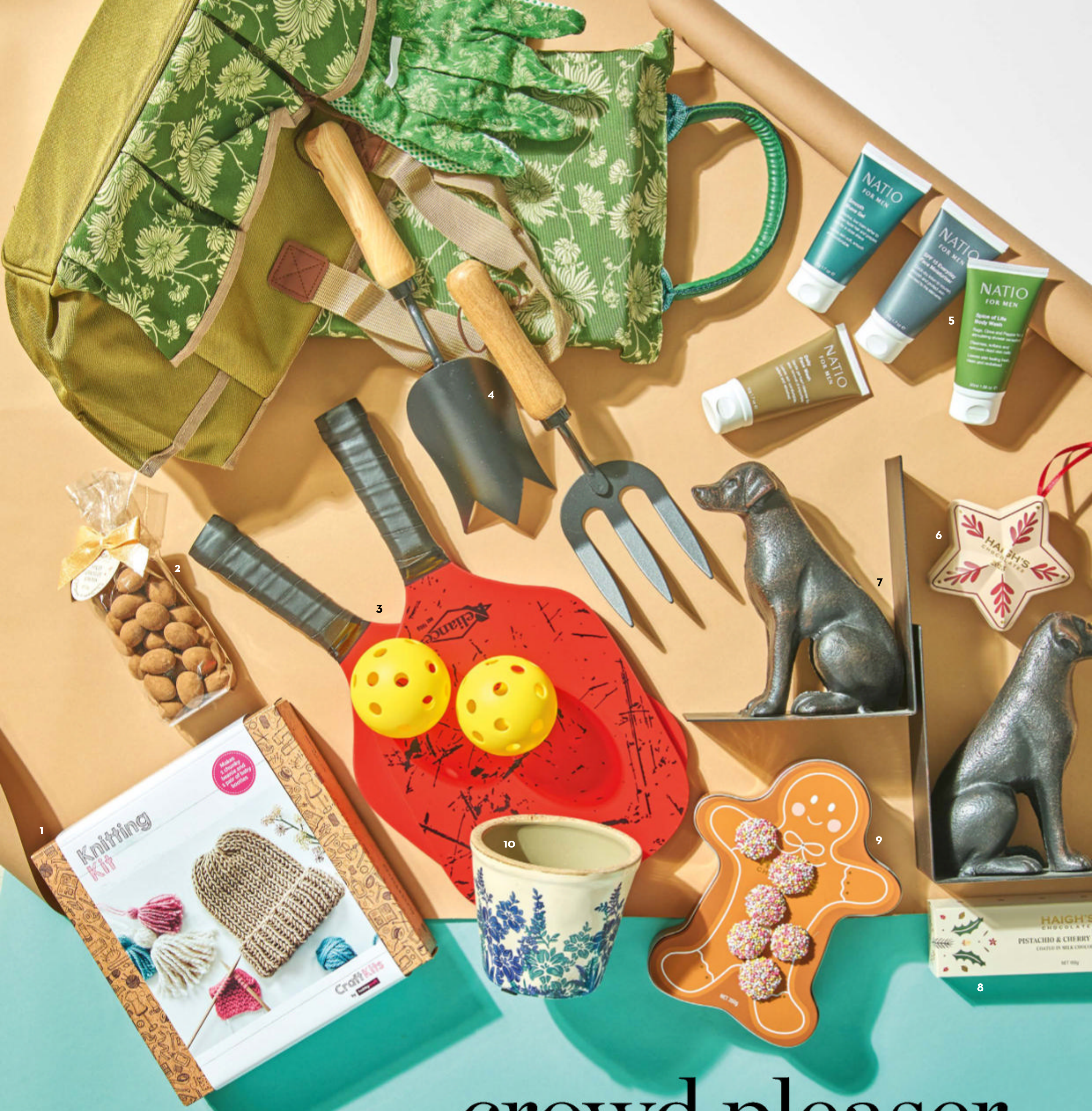
SCAN ME
Scan the QR code to shop these products.

Buy the Lvly peacock plant and pot, $90, up to Christmas Eve in certain metro areas.

Give TLC with an Endota gift card for spa locations around Australia and an online shop.

Gift stitching with Spruce Craft Co's cross stitch subscription box, $59 quarterly.

Prices are approximate and a guide only.


NATIO FOR MEN
5
4
6
2
7
3
1
Knitting Kit
10
9
HAIGH'S CHOCOLATES
PISTACHIO & CHERRY
8
Craft Kits

SCAN ME
Scan the QR code to shop these products.

crowd pleaser

Still stuck and don't know what to buy them? These options are fail safe.

1 Hobbycraft knitting kit, $12, from Officeworks. **2** Haigh's Spiced Chocolate Almonds, $26.50. **3** Reliance pickleball set, $25, from BIG W. **4** Cowelt garden tools eight-piece set, $63.99, from Amazon. **5** Natio for Men Essentials travel set, $27.95. **6** Haigh's Milk Chocolate Baubles Classic Gift Tin, $21.50. **7** Belvoir Labrador bookends, $94.95, from French Knot. **8** Haigh's Pistachio & Cherry Nougat, $21.90. **9** Haigh's Merry Mixture Classic Christmas Gift Tin, $35. **10** Sevenoaks small planter, $19.95, from French Knot. ■

Gifting GOALS

Eight cheerful ways to keep gifting costs down, even in big families.

Words JADE COULL

Coming from a big Italian family, my Christmas Day is packed with relatives, massive feasts and, of course, gifts. To try to keep things affordable (there's a lot of us!), we've tried almost every form of giving over the years, from Secret Santa (aka Kris Kringle), Bad Santa, gifts under $50 and DIYs.

So, if you're stuck on what to do with your family, try out one of these ideas. You get all the excitement of unwrapping a present without budget being an issue!

1

SECRET SANTA

Secret Santa is popular among large families, friends and co-workers. Write everyone's names on separate pieces of paper, then fold and place them in a hat. Everyone will randomly draw a name and buy a gift for that person, but the giver's identity is secret. When gifts are opened, the receiver must guess who they think their Secret Santa is.

SILLY GIFTING EXPERIENCES

2

Some people are difficult to shop for – they insist they don't want anything. When this happens, I resort to my trusty silly gifting experience. I've been known to take a generic gift, like a gift card or money, and wrap it in layers of boxes. For each layer, I'll secure it with zip-ties, masking tape, superglue – anything from the hardware store that will make it difficult to unwrap. I promise, it's hilarious to watch! Seeing them struggle but enjoying the journey is so much fun. To make it better, you can add personalised notes in each layer with riddles or clues about the gift.

3

Set a price limit for gifts

Setting a price limit for gifts can be a great idea, whether you're buying for many or playing a fun gifting game. It means everyone is on the same page and it prevents awkward moments where one person receives a $20 gift and another person a pressie worth more than $100. Set a price limit everyone is comfortable with; sometimes lower is safer. Make sure to have that chat before you start shopping!

Happy holidays!

4

START DIY GIFTS EARLY

The best gifts are made with effort, heart and your own two hands. If you're a creative bunch, why not agree on giving homemade gifts? Whether it's a painting, a piece of knitting, a batch of biscuits (see page 74), writing a short story or poem, or upcycling an old piece of furniture, these gifts will be appreciated. Depending on what it is, remember to start on your gifts early enough to avoid last-minute stress!

5

BAD SANTA

Bad Santa, also known as Dirty Santa or White Elephant, is a game that can get heated and competitive, but it's also a heap of fun! Everyone brings a wrapped gift and puts it in a pile. Next, you draw a number to figure out the order of opening gifts. The first person will choose a gift and unwrap it, then the second person can either choose a new gift or steal the gift the first person unwrapped. If your gift is stolen, you receive the gift the other person has given up. This repeats until all gifts have been opened. Play strategically. You'll notice the most popular gifts get swapped multiple times!

6

Gifts for kids only

There may come a time when unwrapping your presents isn't the best part of Christmas. Your big thrills come from seeing little ones rip open their presents and explode in a burst of joy. So, if you have a big family with lots of young children like I do, you may want to only buy presents for the littlies. This makes it easier to keep to a budget but the memories are still priceless.

7

BOOK SWAP

In a family of big readers, gifting each other your favourite reads can be fun – especially as you can dissect and discuss the stories later. It doesn't matter if the books aren't pristine if they were pre-loved! You're giving a new home to a book that would otherwise sit on the shelf and get dusty.

Acts of service

8

Sharing your time and effort can be a great no- or low-cost way of gifting and it creates memories that will always be cherished. In my family, we love the idea of swapping little vouchers. You can offer to babysit for a night, provide a freshly baked cake, spend a day refreshing the garden, teach someone how to crochet, or show them how to make pasta from scratch. The real present is connection. ■

Photography Adobe Stock

Channel your *holiday* CALM

The hustle and bustle of this time of year can make you feel like you need a time-out. These moves will help you take it down a notch physically and mentally, so that your holiday is filled with less stress and more joy.

Words MELANIE MANNARINO & SOPHIE AL-BASSAM *Illustrations* ANNE BENTLEY

THE STRESSOR

Spending on gifts

The Christmas holidays are likely to be the only time of year that your budget has to include gifts for family, friends and even colleagues; it's easy to stress about the financial tally.

■ Moment of calm

Try suggesting to your loved ones that you only give presents to the kids, advises finance writer Andrea Black. Enjoy "spending quality time together, which is a gift in itself," she says. "Or suggest a gift of food or wine for the celebration that you can all share in."

■ The action plan

No-one really needs another scented candle. "Remind yourself that material things don't matter as much as spending quality time with our family and friends," says Andrea. Instead of gifting, suggest a date where you can meet up and do a low-cost activity together like a hike in a national park or a beach barbecue.

THE STRESSOR

Family boundaries

Nobody can strike a nerve like family – even if they're "just being honest" or "trying to help". You love them; you just want to get through the holidays without any drama.

■ Moment of calm

"It helps to practise calming strategies before you face difficult situations," says psychologist Rachel Samson. "Try grounding yourself by pushing your feet into the floor, taking deep slow breaths, loosening your body, or thinking about the person who you feel most safe with." Practise these strategies so your self-regulation 'muscles' are strong when you need them.

■ The action plan

"Picturing yourself responding in a healthy way can help you respond in this way in the moment," says Rachel. And avoid unhelpful triggers for you, such as alcohol or certain topics of conversation.

THE STRESSOR

Extra hours at work

Why is the busy season always so... busy? If you're logging extra time, your body and mind are bound to rebel.

■ Moment of calm

Take regular micro-breaks, says Rachel. "Walk to the cafe or kitchen to grab a tea, stretch your legs in the office, or go outside. Changing your environment, even briefly, can help to regulate stress."

■ The action plan

Take a deep breath and reframe the situation. "Ask yourself: is this an emergency? Most of the time, the answer will be no. When we are under stress, things can feel more urgent and more serious than they are," says Rachel. If you are struggling to keep perspective, talk to a trusted colleague, friend or a therapist and ask them to share their take on the situation. And when you do get a break, don't check on work unless you have to.

THE STRESSOR

Everyone's expectations

There's more pressure than ever to make holidays 'magical' – and this is where scrolling through social media can hurt. "Comparison is the thief of joy, and there is research showing exposure to social media can negatively impact our mood via negative comparison," says Rachel.

■ Moment of calm

"Limit exposure to social media, unfollow accounts that have a negative impact on your mood and increase the amount of time connecting with people who make you feel good to protect your mental health," Rachel says.

■ The action plan

Promise yourself you won't try to live up to every expectation. Then try a social media blocker app on your phone, like Freedom or Opal, or just delete your social media apps to take a break. Try calling up your favourite people instead.

THE STRESSOR

Travel overload

Planes, trains, automobiles and all the planning that involves can tie your body up in knots and disrupt sleep and eating habits. Not to mention the impact of sitting for hours on end!

■ Moment of calm

Try these stretches to counter the effects of sitting. ***Chair pose:*** standing, lift arms overhead and bend knees to lower yourself as if you're sitting in a chair. Hold for 30–60 seconds. ***Standing crescent half-moon:*** with feet together, lift your arms overhead and bring hands together. From the waist, lean to the left, hold for a moment, then lean to the right.

■ The action plan

Dehydration causes symptoms such as headaches and fatigue. Keep a water bottle on hand so you can drink throughout your trip. If you're flying, you can fill it up after passing security.

THE STRESSOR

Juggling social plans

Having lots of plans is arguably a positive – friends and family want to celebrate with you. But it's easy to lose sight of activities you'd enjoy versus those that feel like obligations.

■ Moment of calm

"Slow breathing is an important component of mindfulness – a practice that helps us to bring our awareness back to the present moment and our own bodies when we are getting swept up in a storm of thoughts and emotions. Try the box-breathing technique: breathe in to the count of four, hold for the count of four, breathe out to the count of four, and hold for the count of four," Rachel says.

■ The action plan

"Block out time in the calendar before social plans book you up," says Rachel. It could be a couple of days or a few hours for some alone time. You don't need to fit everything in before Christmas, either! ■

If you're pining for a white Christmas, poinsettia bracts now emerge in white. They can also be pink, yellow, variegated or marbled.

STAR *attraction*

Poinsettias are a popular Christmas gift, but sadly they don't always stay around past January! Understanding the topsy-turvy world of this striking plant will help you keep it alive all year round. *Words* JENNY DILLON

While many of our Christmas traditions come from Europe, one in particular hails from America – brilliant red and green poinsettias. The twist is that these plants bloom in winter. That's perfect for Christmas in the northern hemisphere, so how do they bloom in our hot summers? (The answer is below left.) And those bright red 'petals'? They're bracts, or modified leaves, and the flowers are the tiny yellow things in the middle.

Many people throw out their Chrismas poinsettias once the stunning bracts fall off, thinking the plant is dying. But take it out of its pot and plant it in your garden and it will grow into a beautiful small tree that will brighten your winter as the red bracts return.

LEFT To make cut poinsettias last longer, plunge the stems into hot water for about 20 seconds to stop the flow of sap, then set in damp floral foam.

HOW DO OUR POINSETTIAS BLOOM IN SUMMER?

About two months before Christmas, commercial nurseries create conditions that make poinsettias think they're coming into winter. They do this by artificially creating 14 hours of darkness, followed by 10 hours of brightness, imitating the conditions they're used to in their native Mexico. Once the red bracts appear just before Christmas, they're rushed to the stores. In general, the bracts last only a couple of weeks, sometimes a bit longer, but just long enough to add extra festive cheer.

Poinsettias don't cope with cool climates and frosts. If that sounds like your place, pot up poinsettias into larger containers as they grow. Put them outdoors during the warmer months, then move them inside during the cooler periods.

Poinsettias don't like draughts so keep them away from air-conditioning units or fans while they're indoors.

CHRISTMAS PAST

Native to Mexico, poinsettias (*Euphorbia pulcherrima*) were part of Aztec culture for centuries before the first US ambassador to Mexico, Joel Poinsett, spotted them in 1828. He sent specimens to friends and botanical gardens in the US. Eventually, commercial production of the plants began in California in the early 1900s. Apart from the fact they're one of the few plants that flower in winter, poinsettias became part of the Christmas tradition because, when looked on from above, the leaf and bract arrangement takes on the shape of the star of Bethlehem.

Keep your POINSETTIA ALIVE

Don't throw out your poinsettia when you take down your Christmas decorations. You can keep growing it inside or even plant it in your garden.

Growing in pots

- Choose a pot at least 40cm wide and deep and fill it three-quarters full with quality potting mix.
- Remove the poinsettia from its growing container and gently tease apart the roots.
- Make a small well in the potting mix, position the plant in it, then fill with potting mix and firm down. Water well.
- Place your pot in an area that gets full sun to part shade and is also sheltered from winds.
- If you live in a cool climate that gets frosts, keep the poinsettia indoors, where it will get at least six hours of indirect sunlight each day.
- Feed every 1–2 weeks with organic liquid plant food, following the package instructions.

Growing in your garden

- Choose a spot in the garden that gets full sun to part shade and is sheltered from winds.
- Prepare the soil by digging in quality organic matter.
- Dig a hole twice as wide and the same depth as the plant's root ball.
- Remove the poinsettia from its container and gently tease open the roots.
- Place in the hole and backfill, gently firming down.
- Water well.
- Lay mulch on the soil, keeping it away from the base of the poinsettia plant.
- Feed every 1–2 weeks with organic liquid plant food, following the package instructions.

LEFT AND ABOVE Petioles, or leaf stems, that are red will produce red bracts, while light green petioles mean the bracts will be white. Once in your garden, that little poinsettia can grow as tall as 4 metres.

LONG LASTING

When flowering has finished and bracts have dropped off, tip prune the whole poinsettia plant to encourage new growth. Once it adapts to Australia's seasons and starts flowering in winter, give it a prune when flowering has finished. **NOTE** Poinsettias are members of the euphorbia family and one of its traits is a milky sap that irritates skin and eyes. Wear gloves, long sleeves, long trousers and protective eyewear when pruning. ■

Photography Adobe Stock

Jenny Dillon
Garden Editor

In your GARDEN

Christmas ideas for your garden, decorating and gifting.

Go floral and FESTIVE

- **Nestle banksia seed pods and large gumnuts** (that look like Christmas bells!) in a small branch of long-leafed eucalyptus to make a striking table arrangement for a drinks table, counter or mantelpiece. The long gum leaves can droop down the front and their perfume will fill the room.
- **Make floral arrangements** with native blooms such as red kangaroo paws or red flowering gum flowers and twigs of silver cushion bush (*Leucophyta brownii*) or silver dollar gum (*Eucalyptus cinerea*) to get the classic red and silver theme.
- **Put cuttings of red bottlebrush flowers** in glass vases as table settings, or place them in upturned glass jars with the lid on to keep things tidy when the stamens fall off.
- **Place a red grevillea flower** instead of plastic holly on top of a Christmas pudding.
- **Wrap tall, large candles** with soft stem cuttings of the brilliant red flowering NSW Christmas bush.
- **Decorate your Christmas tree** with flannel flowers so you get more than one star on your tree.
- **Cut the fluffy seed heads** off your native clematis or old man's beard (*C. aristata*) and attach them to your tree so it looks like snow has fallen overnight.

BE PRACTICAL

Here's how to get your garden glowing for Christmas!

- Lay new mulch to smarten up garden beds.
- Green up lawns with hose-on fertiliser.
- Consider a shade sail for lazy days of alfresco dining.
- Add water-storing crystals to pots for when you are too busy celebrating to water.
- Clean pavers, concrete and outdoor metal furniture with a pressure hose.
- Deadhead spent roses.
- Install a set of solar lights along paths to brighten the way.
- Lighten up a dull corner with a collection of vibrant potted geraniums in pinks, reds and whites.

> “The rose is the flower and handmaiden of love – the lily, her fair associate, is the emblem of beauty and purity.”
>
> DOROTHEA DIX, AMERICAN MEDICAL ACTIVIST

CHRISTMAS LILY

KISS OF LIFE

RECYCLING CYCS

Chrissie gifts of pretty potted cyclamen can live on after festivities finish. Simply retire the cyclamen to a cool, dry shady spot without water and fertiliser until the leaves start yellowing and dying off. Snip away these leaves and remaining flowers. When the corm starts to reshoot in autumn, begin watering and fertilising again with the pot in a bright, airy location.

STUNNING CONES ON A NORWAY SPRUCE EMERGE IN SPRING AND EARLY SUMMER.

GARDEN *SECRETS*

Treat your Christmas garden to a tree for the ages.

1

GET REAL

Why splurge on a recently chopped radiata pine, or a tinselly artificial tree, when a living original can grace your home for this and many Christmases to come?

2

INSIDE OUT

You could trim and decorate a young Norway spruce or lemon-scented conifer for inside display this festive season, then plant it out and decorate year by year.

3

AUSSIE, AUSSIE, AUSSIE

For a local flavour, consider a luxuriant lilly pilly, a mini sized woolly bush (*Adenanthos sericeus*), a Tasmanian cypress pine (*Callitris oblonga*) or an iconic Wollemi pine.

GET *CREATIVE*

- Get your creative Christmas juices flowing by making your own decorations for the big day – maybe a festive wreath of flowers and foliage from your own garden for the table or front door, using a bent wire coathanger as the frame.
- Make table place cards using crisp white cards and dried flowers.
- Plant a rainbow of short-stemmed cosmos, calibrachoas and petunias in an old wheelbarrow as a movable decoration, and include drainage holes.
- If time is short, buy a hanging basket of already flowering annuals and add your own touches with baubles and tinsel, or stars cut from white cardboard and coloured Santa red by your kids.

GARDENING ADVICE

◆ **NET** fruit trees to keep marauding pests at bay. ◆ **MULCH** garden beds and apply wetting agent to pots to prevent drying out. ◆ **TRIM** repeat-flowering roses and fertilise to encourage repeat blooming in autumn. ◆ **RAISE** mower blades to avoid scalping summer lawns. ◆ **PROTECT** tender hydrangeas from late-afternoon sun and, if necessary, set up temporary shadecloth. ◆ **FERTILISE** tree ferns with half-strength liquid fertiliser and cut away dead fronds. ■

Photography Tony Fawcett, Adobe Stock, Getty Images

Milton Black
Astrologer

MOON guide

Garden according to the phases of the moon with Milton Black.

HYDRANGEAS

Milton's tips for Sagittarius season

(Nov 23 to Dec 21)

Sagittarians are independent people who need plenty of space and freedom to express their outgoing nature. Their ruling planet Jupiter corresponds to the colour purple, and their gardens are usually full of a variety of trees, shrubs and flowers – the more the better. Sagittarians flood their gardens with verbenas, dianthus, zinnias, hydrangeas, wisteria, rhododendrons and Japanese maples. Fresh vegetables out of the home garden are a must, as are fruit trees. Sagittarians love sport and being outside, exploring and adventuring. As natural extroverts, they can be great hosts and especially like an outdoor party.

CAPRICORN
SAGITTARIUS
SCORPIO
LIBRA
VIRGO
AQUARIUS
PISCES
ARIES
TAURUS
GEMINI

ZODIAC SIGNS

The 12 signs of the zodiac are divided into four groups – fire, air, earth and water.

Fire signs
Aries and **Sagittarius** are in harmony with all fruit. **Leo** is in harmony with nuts and all seed-producing crops.

Earth signs
Capricorn and **Taurus** are in harmony with all root vegetables that produce crops below the ground, including garlic. **Virgo** is in harmony with all herbs.

Air signs
Libra, Aquarius and **Gemini** are in harmony with plants that produce flowers and perfumes.

Water signs
Cancer, Scorpio and **Pisces** are in harmony with above-ground crops, including trees, shrubs, lawns, and leafy, juicy and fleshy vegetables.

♐ Sagittarius
♑ Capricorn
♒ Aquarius
♓ Pisces
♈ Aries
♉ Taurus
♊ Gemini
♋ Cancer
♌ Leo
♍ Virgo
♎ Libra
♏ Scorpio

Photography and illustration Adobe Stock, Getty Images

DECEMBER 2025

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
	1 Moon in Aries ♈	**2** Moon enters Taurus 1.12pm	**3** ♉	**4** Moon enters Gemini 12.48pm	**5** Full Moon in Gemini 9.13am	6 Moon enters Cancer 11.54am
7 ♋	8 Moon enters Leo 12.48pm	9 ♌	10 Moon enters Virgo 5.20pm	11 ♍	12 Last Quarter Moon 6.51am	13 Moon enters Libra 2.04am
14 ♎	15 Moon enters Scorpio 1.51pm	16 ♏	17 ♏	18 Moon enters Sagittarius at 2.38am	19 ♐	**20** New Moon in Sagittarius 11.43am Moon enters Capricorn 2.52pm
21 ♑	**22** ♑	**23** Moon enters Aquarius 1.51am	**24** ♒	**25** Moon enters Pisces 11.08am	**26** ♓	**27** Moon enters Aries 6.01pm
28 First Quarter Moon in Aries 5.09am	**29** Moon enters Taurus 9.57pm	**30** ♉	**31** ♉			

1 Solid number means plant all **ABOVE**-ground crops during the moon's **WAXING** cycle.

1 Hollow number means plant all **BELOW**-ground crops during the moon's **WANING** cycle.

How to use the calendar

🟨 **Best days**

🟥 **Second-best days**

On these days, thin out seed boxes, sow seeds and plant seedlings that produce their crop above the ground.

These include peas, beans, corn, cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, brussels sprouts, eggplant, lettuce, celery, silverbeet, spinach, endive, Chinese cabbage, tomato, cucumber, asparagus crowns, artichoke, marrow, pumpkin, capsicum, melon, zucchini, chicory, sprouts, rhubarb and herbs (except garlic).

You can also plant out flowering shrubs, annuals, flowers (not bulbs), cactus, tree ferns, flax, passionfruit vines and kiwifruit.

Plant fruit trees and trees that produce edible nuts, such as almond, macadamia, pecan and walnut. Grapes and banana can also be planted.

Take cuttings from established trees and shrubs, and propagate. This is also a good time for planting trees and climbers, and sowing new lawns.

🟩 **Best days**

🟫 **Second-best days**

On these days, sow seeds and plant seedlings that grow their crops below ground, such as carrot, parsnip, radish, beetroot, onion, leek, swede, turnip, sweet potato, seed potato, yam, cassava, garlic and ginger.

This is a good time to plant flowering bulbs or bulbs for propagation and development rather than flowers. Also, plant bare-rooted trees to develop root growth, and refurbish established lawns.

🟥 A favourable time for transplanting all types of established trees, shrubs, ferns and bulbs.

☐ Weed and lightly feed. Water with seaweed-type products only.

🟪 Destroy or spray weeds, pests and noxious growth. Cut lawns, do heavy pruning and clear rubbish – don't plant or transplant anything.

Prepare soil and fertilise garden beds for future planting; spread and make compost. Feed all established plants, shrubs and lawns, then water in. This is the best time for dethatching or coring lawns.

🟦 Do not plant or transplant anything, as the moon is adversely aspected with the sun.

Times are in Australian Eastern Standard Time, AEST. This applies to NSW, the ACT, Qld, Vic and Tas. For SA and NT, deduct half an hour. For WA, deduct two hours. During Daylight Saving Time, add 1 hour. **Any questions?** Email milton@miltonblack.com.au ■

better gardening

[NEWS, PRODUCTS AND TRENDS.]

SCAN ME
Scan this QR
code to shop
these items.

BOBBY DAZZLERS

Create a Santa-worthy display with the new Dianthus Dart series from Nature's Décor. The six-flower range will bring a festive touch to garden beds, borders, pots and rockeries. Try the flamboyant red white picotee (pictured) or heat-tolerant blooms in scarlet, raspberry and white. Dianthus thrives in full sun and free-draining soil and, if planted now, it can dazzle through to autumn. You'll find Dianthus Dart at plant retailers.

WILD SIDE

GIVE IT A SHAKE

Mr Fothergill's
EDIBLE FLOWER GARDEN
SEED SHAKER
DIRECT SOW SEED MIX

Growing an edible flower patch is simple with this new Mr Fothergill's seed shaker mix. It includes 10g of seed from nasturtiums, marigolds, chamomile and others, and vermiculite to get growth jumping. It's $15 from garden centres, Bunnings and mrfothergills.com.au.

KEEP 'EM THRIVING

Indoor magic

Perk up your indoor plants using tips from Tammy Huynh's **The Plant Book** (Murdoch Books, $45). Initially dealing with maintenance, pests and diseases and trouble shooting, Tammy then profiles 50 popular houseplants and their unique needs. There's good advice, drawings and beautiful photos.

The Plant Book
The ultimate guide to thriving houseplants
Tammy Huynh

WHAT'S ON

Just for kids

Melbourne's beloved Ian Potter Foundation Children's Garden, nestled within Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria, recently turned 21. It's a brilliant, endorphin-boosting play space for little ones. There's a bamboo forest and plant tunnels to hide in, a wetland of ponds and a stream to splash in and a kitchen garden where they can dig (no good clothes worn here!). It's open Wednesdays to Sundays, plus all Victorian school holidays; see rbg.vic.gov.au. ■

We believe no child should be held back by poverty.

Do you?

Today, 1 in 6 Australian children like Tom* are living with poverty. It can take away so much, but it should never take away a child's self-belief and chance to build a better future.

This Christmas, give the gift of extra learning support so children like Tom can thrive.

Donate now

*Names, location and associated images have been changed to protect the identity of Tom and his family.

Please donate today.

The Smith Family ☎ 1800 024 069

CHRISTMAS
APPEAL
2025

The Smith Family
Learn today, change tomorrow.

SANTA PAWS

When you just have to get your pet all dressed up for Christmas.

Words CAROLINE ZAMBRANO

TIPS TO GET YOUR PET TO WEAR AN OUTFIT

Have you bought the cutest Christmas dress-up for your dog, only to watch them freeze like a statue the moment it touches their fur? Getting your pet into the festive spirit doesn't have to be a battle of wills.

"The trick is to start slowly," says veterinarian Dr Laura Taylor from the Sydney Dogs and Cats Home. "Let them sniff and explore the outfit before your put it on them. Then try short sessions with plenty of treats and praise."

Begin with easy pieces, such as a cute bow or patterned bandana, before moving on to the full Santa or elf costume, and always reward their willingness!

"Keep an eye on your pet for signs of stress, such as lip-licking or pawing at the outfit, and stop if they're uncomfortable," she says. "Pet outfits should be lightweight and never restrict movement, cover eyes or cause overheating."

And if your furry friend would rather play the Grinch than wear a Christmas tree dress? That's paw-fectly fine. A bright joyful bow, colourful collar or lead can add plenty of holiday cheer, too!

Let your pet explore their outfit before dressing them up.

Photography Adobe Stock. Prices are approximate and a guide only.

1 The FuzzYard **Festive Spirit Christmas wrap vest**, from $23.07, has easy-to-secure velcro straps, machine washable fabric and is available in seven sizes.

2 Dress your cat in the Responsible Pet Breeders Australia **fun cat costume**, from $32.99, decorated with a cheerful reindeer print.

3 For pups who aren't into dress-ups, the Coco & Pud **Deck The Paws adjustable Christmas dog harness**, from $34.95, brings seasonal cheer with a comfy, lightweight and washable design that's easy to slip on for walks.

4 Who needs a tree when you have one on four legs? The **Doggytopia Christmas tree dog costume**, from $29.95, features layered velveteen trimmed with pompoms and embroidery.

5 Turn your dog into an adorable little Santa's helper with the **Doggytopia elf dog costume**, from $29.95.

6 Make people 'ho ho ho' with the **Doggytopia Santa Claus doggy sleigh costume**, from $44.95. The velour hooded vest has antlers, fluffy trim and adjustable velcro straps to keep Santa in place.

7 Dress your feline friend in FuzzYard **Tinsel Time**, $17.95, a Christmas set complete with a breakaway collar and bell, bow tie and bandana patterned with candy canes, gingerbread, holly and Christmas trees. ■

1

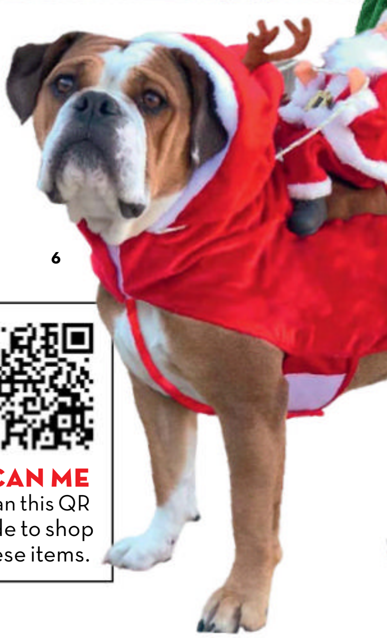
2

3

4

5

6



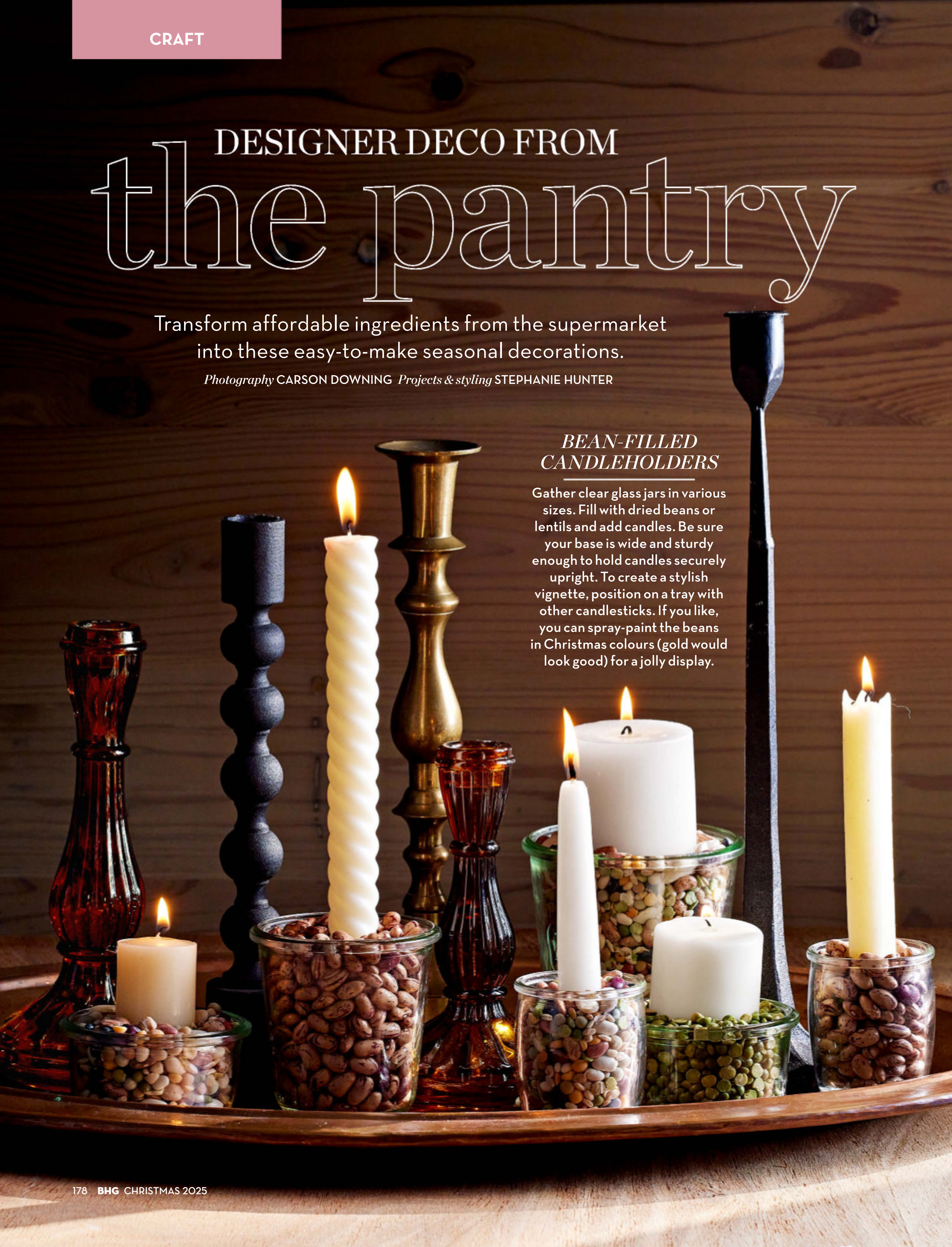
SCAN ME
Scan this QR code to shop these items.

7

DESIGNER DECO FROM the pantry

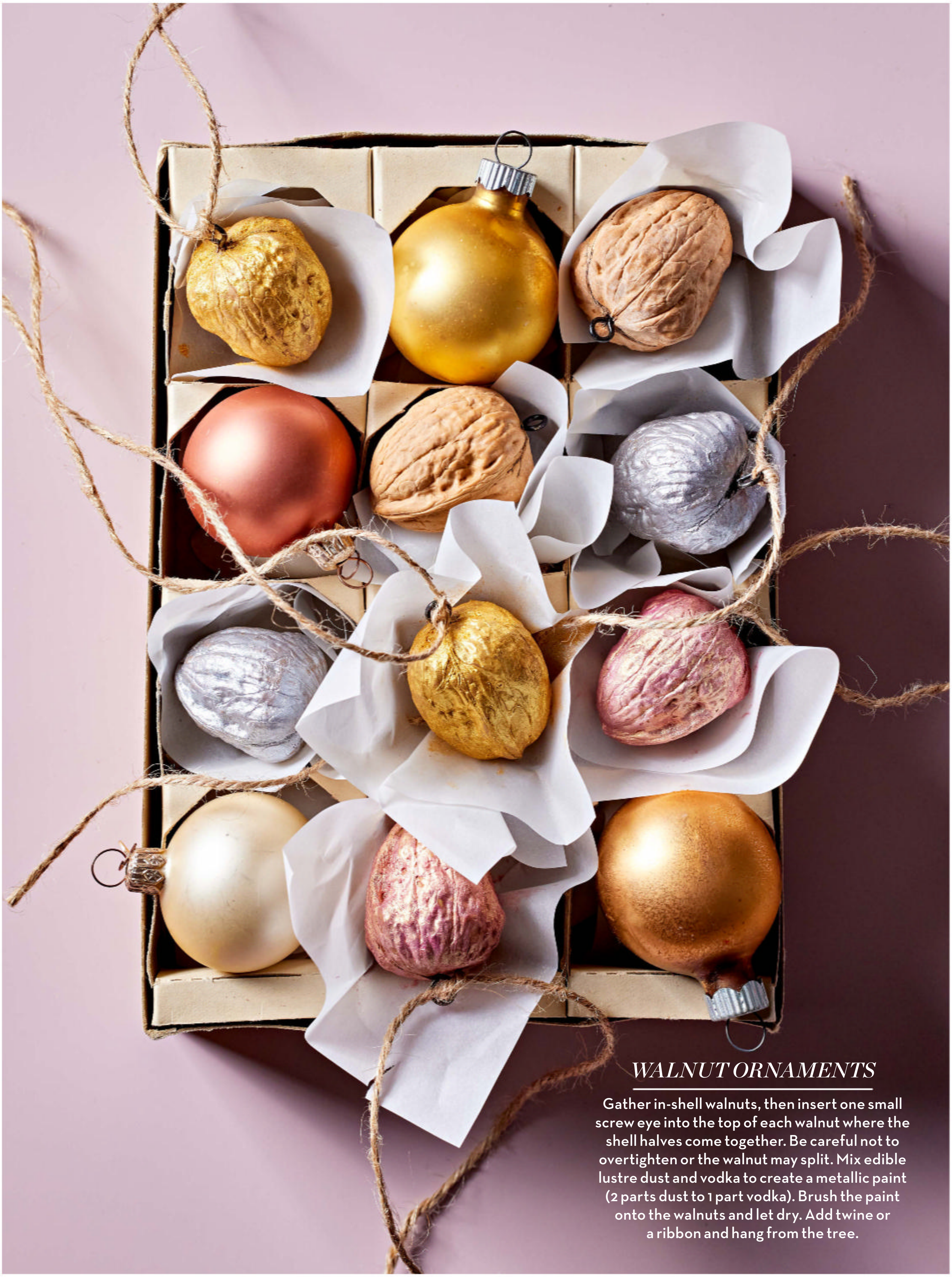
Transform affordable ingredients from the supermarket into these easy-to-make seasonal decorations.

Photography CARSON DOWNING *Projects & styling* STEPHANIE HUNTER



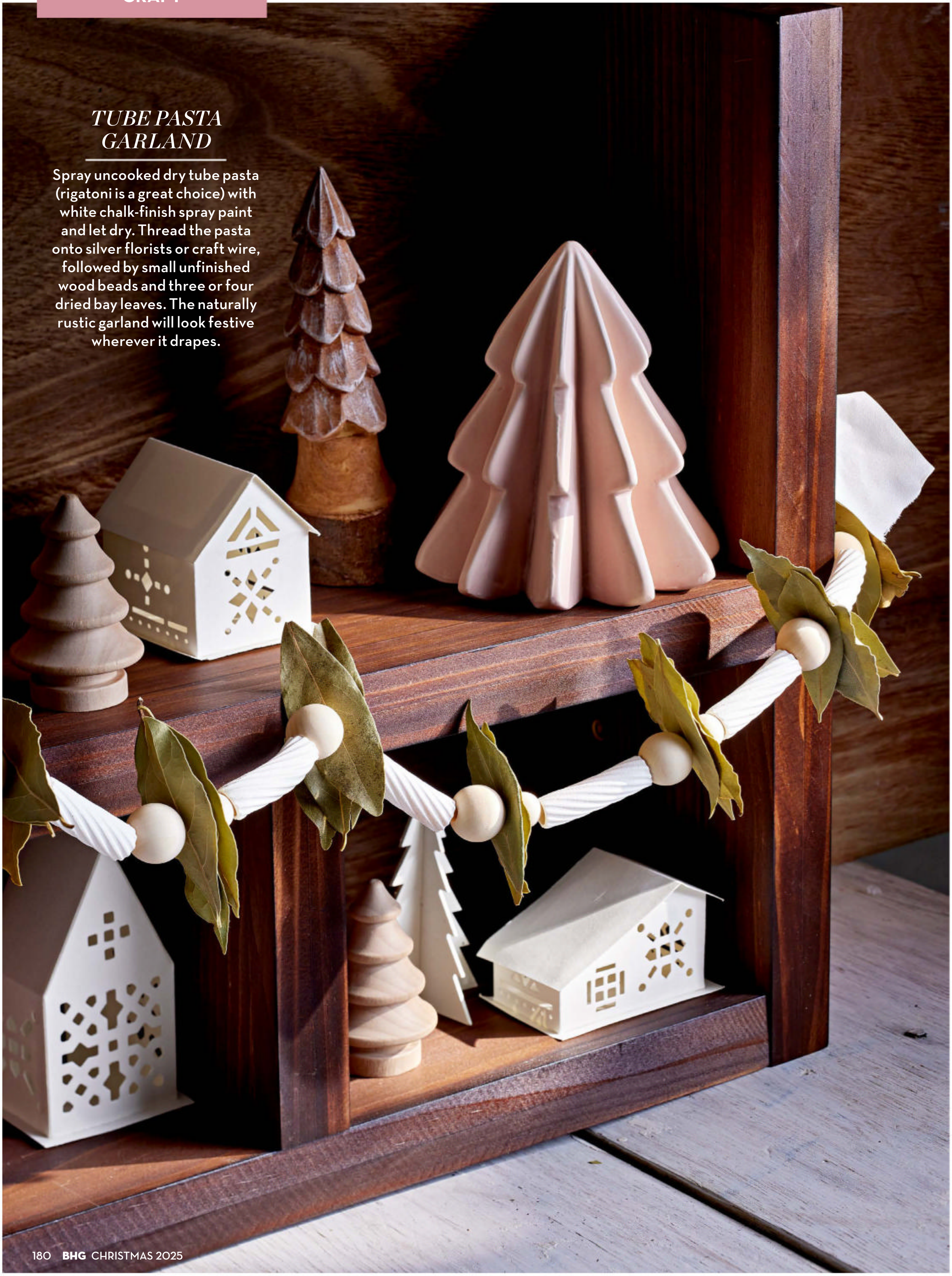
BEAN-FILLED CANDLEHOLDERS

Gather clear glass jars in various sizes. Fill with dried beans or lentils and add candles. Be sure your base is wide and sturdy enough to hold candles securely upright. To create a stylish vignette, position on a tray with other candlesticks. If you like, you can spray-paint the beans in Christmas colours (gold would look good) for a jolly display.



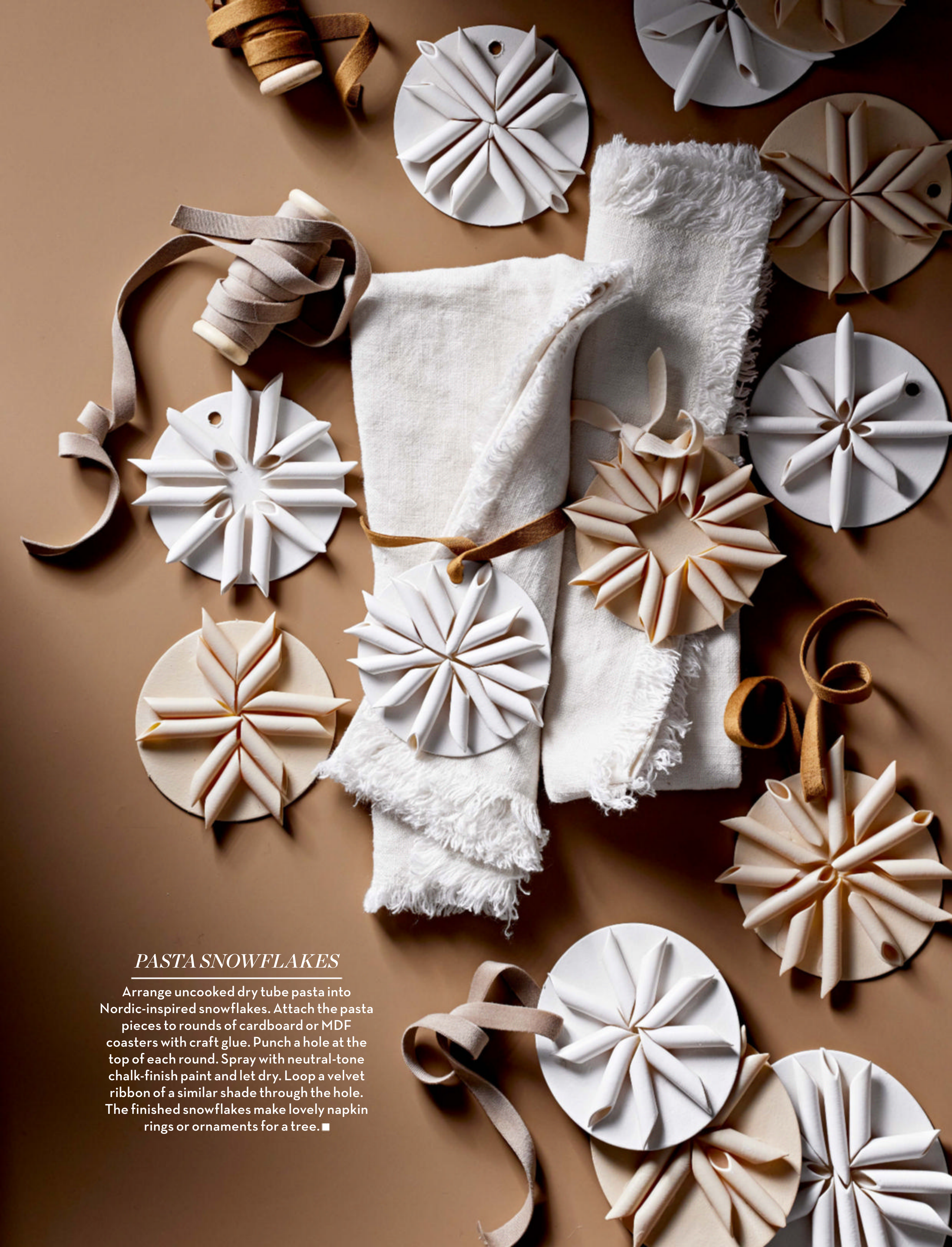
WALNUT ORNAMENTS

Gather in-shell walnuts, then insert one small screw eye into the top of each walnut where the shell halves come together. Be careful not to overtighten or the walnut may split. Mix edible lustre dust and vodka to create a metallic paint (2 parts dust to 1 part vodka). Brush the paint onto the walnuts and let dry. Add twine or a ribbon and hang from the tree.



TUBE PASTA GARLAND

Spray uncooked dry tube pasta (rigatoni is a great choice) with white chalk-finish spray paint and let dry. Thread the pasta onto silver florists or craft wire, followed by small unfinished wood beads and three or four dried bay leaves. The naturally rustic garland will look festive wherever it drapes.



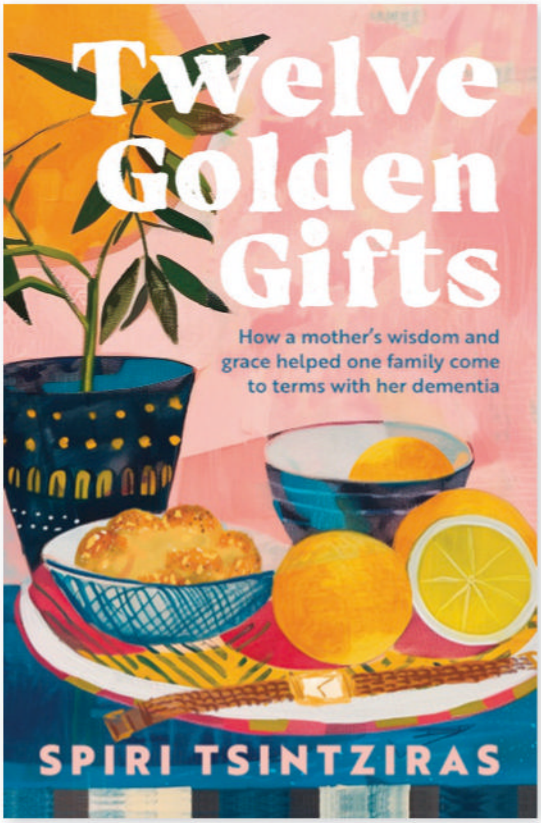
PASTA SNOWFLAKES

Arrange uncooked dry tube pasta into Nordic-inspired snowflakes. Attach the pasta pieces to rounds of cardboard or MDF coasters with craft glue. Punch a hole at the top of each round. Spray with neutral-tone chalk-finish paint and let dry. Loop a velvet ribbon of a similar shade through the hole. The finished snowflakes make lovely napkin rings or ornaments for a tree. ■

better books

[RACHEL IORFINO ON BOOKS THAT INSPIRE CONNECTIONS WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY.]

SCAN ME
Scan the code to shop these great reads.



TOP READ

TWELVE GOLDEN GIFTS

Spiri Tsintziras (ABC Books, $36.99)

Nothing is more difficult than watching a loved one start to forget who they are. As someone with a family member diagnosed with dementia, I was apprehensive about getting stuck into this book. It's a scary, tough experience for everyone involved. But Spiri Tsintziras is gentle with the delivery of her mother's story.

With love hidden between every line of this book, it was moving to read this tale of Spiri and her mother. I loved learning about the wisdom that comes with age and the exceptional understanding that comes with caring for a sick parent.

If you've started to join your parents at doctor's appointments, or worry about grandparents living on their own, then this book is a great choice. It educates without inciting paranoia, and turns what can be a frightening part of life into a reflective experience. It reminds us of the beautiful lives that we build, and the community that comes together once we are no longer able to go on alone.

> “ALL I HAVE TO DO IS THINK OF YOUR VOICE, YOUR TOUCH, YOUR GAZE – YOU GAVE US SO MANY GOLDEN GIFTS.”
>
> TWELVE GOLDEN GIFTS

MAKES YOU THINK

ALWAYS REMEMBER

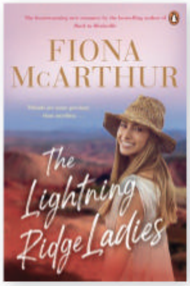
Charlie Mackesy (Ebury Press, $49.99)

Charlie Mackesy left readers of all ages in awe with his first book, *The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse*, and now they're all back to inspire us. This time, the boy comes across a storm and has to make his way through the dark clouds. I loved reading this book for its heartfelt and wholesome narrative.

THE COMFORT READ

THE LIGHTNING RIDGE LADIES

Fiona Macarthur (Penguin Books, $34.99)



You'll be drawn in by the intense romance of Fiona McArthur's new novel, but you'll be staying for the loving community of the Lightning Ridge Ladies. It follows GP Bella Grey who moves to the outback town after the death of her twin brother. If you're looking for a story that's got it all, from thriller to exploring complex relationships, this book is for you.

PEOPLE'S CHOICE

BETWEEN

Anna Walker, (Scribble, $27.99)

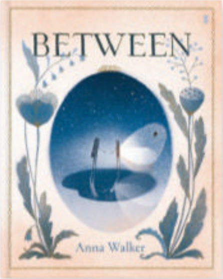
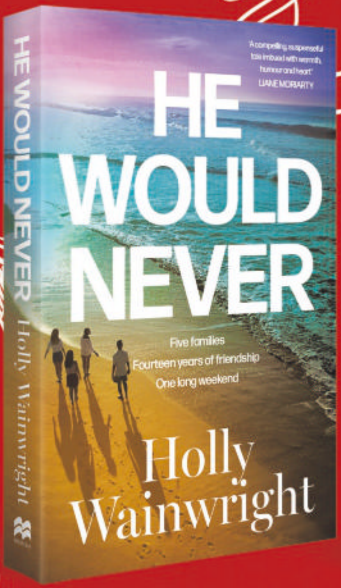
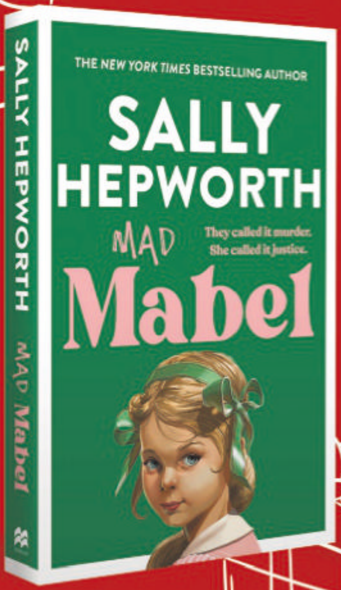


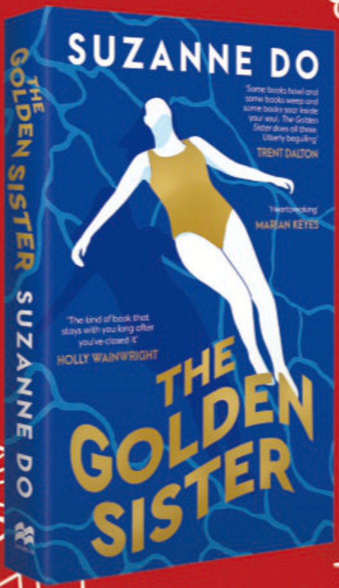
Illustration is not usually the main character, but this new children's book by Anna Walker puts her ethereal drawings front and centre. Follow the relationship between a cricket and a cabbage moth as they unite as small friends in a big world. It's cute, unique and beautiful. Perfect for ages three and up. ■

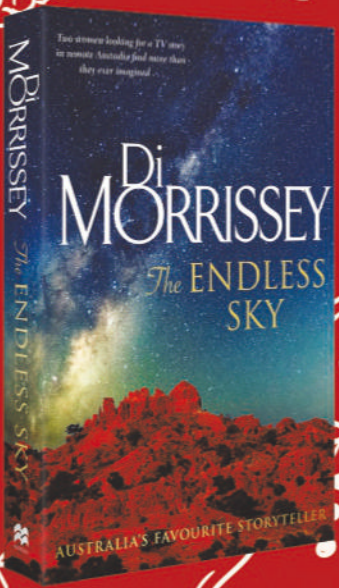
Prices are approximate and a guide only.

MAKE YOUR SHELF PROUD


HE WOULD NEVER
Five families
Fourteen years of friendship
One long weekend
Holly Wainwright
LIANE MORIARTY


THE NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR
SALLY HEPWORTH
MAD Mabel
They called it murder. She called it justice.

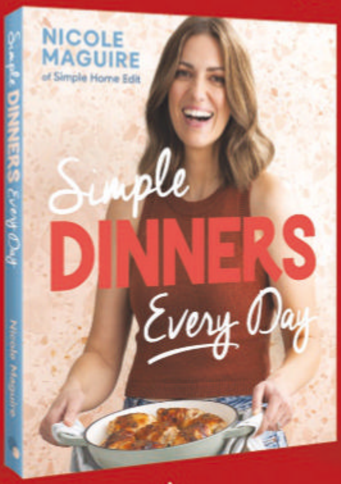

SUZANNE DO
THE GOLDEN SISTER
TRENT DALTON
MARIAN KEYES
HOLLY WAINWRIGHT

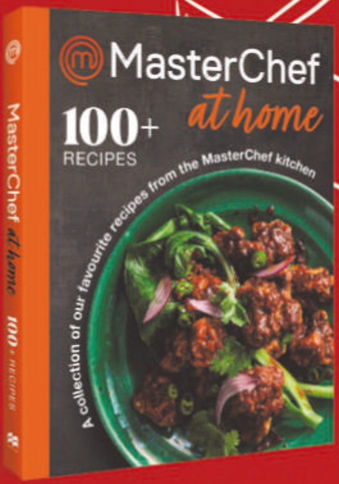

Di MORRISSEY
The ENDLESS SKY
AUSTRALIA'S FAVOURITE STORYTELLER

INDULGE IN THE BEST OF 2025

THE SHORTCUT QUEEN
80 RECIPES FROM CHRISSIE'S HOME REPERTOIRE
Chrissie Swan

2025 ABIA WINNER
DINNERS FOR EVERY NIGHT OF THE WEEK from Australia's favourite cook
RECIPETIN EATS
TONIGHT
NAGI MAEHASHI


NICOLE MAGUIRE
of Simple Home Edit
Simple DINNERS Every Day


MasterChef at home
100+ RECIPES
A collection of our favourite recipes from the MasterChef kitchen

Available where all good books are sold.

MACMILLAN

better finance

[ANDREA BLACK SHARES SIX TIPS FOR LESS MONEY STRESS.]

SCAN ME
Scan the QR code for useful links.

HOW TO NOT GO BROKE AT CHRISTMAS!

What's really valuable at Christmas is time with loved ones.

BLOCK OUT TEMPTATIONS

Here's a simple first step to avoiding serious credit card debt at Christmas. Just for 30 days, mute those social media accounts filled with irresistible offers and unsubscribe from marketing emails. They're all designed to make you buy things, so if you don't see them you won't be tempted! Also try our tips on page 160 on ways to keep gifting costs down.

BE SMART ABOUT BUY NOW, PAY LATER

Can't afford to pay for that Christmas gift right now? Don't fall into the trap of using Buy Now Pay Later (BNPL) to spend way more than you can afford. "The purchase cost can seem cheaper when you split it up into smaller repayments, but many people lose track of how much is due and when," cautions The National Debt Helpline website. If your spending has got out of hand, call the Helpline on 1800 007 007 or go to ndh.org.au for free advice.

DON'T TAKE UNSOLICITED ADVICE

When you see friends and family, they might offer money advice that has worked for them. But everyone's financial situation is different. "Just as you want medical advice from a doctor, seek advice about money from those qualified and registered to give it: a financial adviser, tax accountant, or mortgage or insurance broker," says Helen Baker, an experienced financial adviser and author of *On Your Own Two Feet*.

WORDS OF WISDOM

> IN FAMILY LIFE, LOVE IS THE OIL THAT EASES FRICTION, THE CEMENT THAT BINDS CLOSER TOGETHER, AND THE MUSIC THAT BRINGS HARMONY.

Friedrich Nietzsche, philosopher

This financial information is general in nature and does not take into consideration your personal circumstances. If you need advice, please seek out a licensed financial adviser.

START 2026 RIGHT!

REVIEW YOUR SUPER

How does your super's fees and performance compare with others? Start with the government's YourSuper comparison tool at ato.gov.au/calculators-and-tools.

WORK ON A BUDGET

Set yourself a budget to help master saving and spending in 2026. Head to the MoneySmart website and download its handy Excel spreadsheet to track all your expenses.

GET IN EARLY FOR NEXT YEAR!

Start getting next year's gifts at this year's Boxing Day sales. But choose well. Nab only items they'll love – on a deep discount! ■

Photography Adobe Stock

Protect your family's financial future with

Seniors Life Insurance

Australian residents aged 45–79 can apply

Cover from $10,000 up to $200,000

Easy to apply – no medicals, just answer eight health questions

Lower starting premiums for non-smokers

Immediate cover from day one until age 85, including for terminal illness[1]

Triple payout for accidental death, up to $600,000

Platinum Trusted Service Award 2025 feefo

Platinum Trusted Service Award 2024 feefo

AUSTRALIAN® Seniors

Call 1300 272 512 or visit **seniors.com.au**

[1] Excluding suicide for the first 13 months. Terminal illness with diagnosis of 24 months or less to live.

This is general information only. Please consider the Product Disclosure Statement and Target Market Determination available at seniors.com.au to ensure this product suits your needs. Seniors Life Insurance is promoted and distributed by Greenstone Financial Services Pty Ltd ABN 53 128 692 884, AFSL 343079, and issued by Hannover Life Re of Australasia Ltd ABN 37 062 395 484, AFSL 530811. Terms and conditions apply.

H10653_Q226

mater Queensland
Prize Home

Narelle with husband Dean and Andrew Winter

I won a Mater Prize Home!

In December 2023, life changed forever for Narelle and her family when she won a Mater Prize Home!

Narelle clearly remembers that winning phone call. "I could not believe that the prize draw team was calling me, and that I had won. It all felt like a dream—a dream come true.

That phone call changed our lives forever and has given us a whole new life that we never expected. We kept the house, enjoying extended stays there, and we intend to move there full time in the near future. We've also been able to take an early retirement.

Winning this incredible Mater Prize Home package has meant freedom for us and security for our children. Knowing that our kids will benefit from this win too means everything."

"Few things compare to the joy of changing someone's life! Handing Narelle the keys to her Mater Prize Home is a day I will always remember.

A home is not just where you live; it's where everyone comes together. It becomes the backdrop for your memories," says Andrew Winter, host of 'Selling Houses Australia' and Mater Prize Home Ambassador.

"Property on the Gold Coast, and indeed the value of gold*, has continued to rise in recent years, so it's a prize that has the potential to keep growing," he says.

But for Narelle, supporting Mater Prize Home was always about more than just winning incredible prizes.

> *"Buying tickets was something we always did to support the patients, and of course we hoped and dreamed that one day we might win. Knowing that when you buy tickets it's changing someone else's life means so much," she says.*

Mater Prize Home is a fundraising program of the Mater Foundation, and when you buy tickets, you are bringing hope and healing to so many by supporting vital medical research, the purchase of equipment, and patient care.

And, of course, you might just be our next winner!

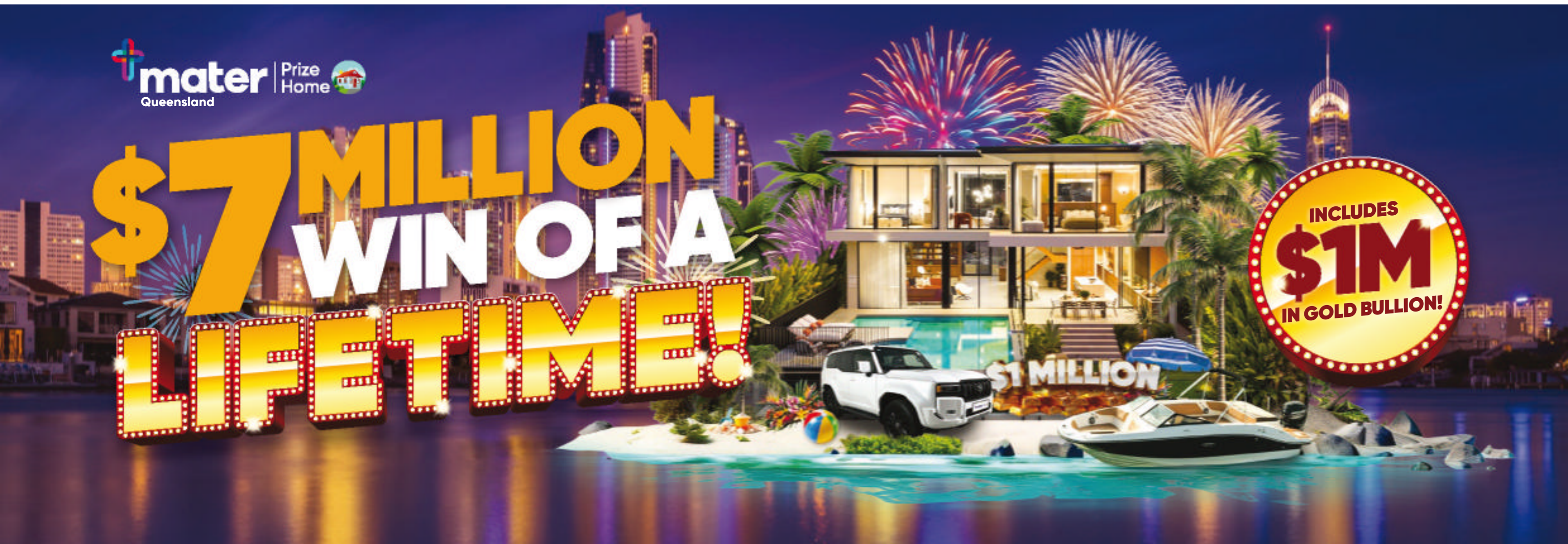
Don't miss your chance to win the latest Mater Prize Home draw, with a record-breaking $7,000,000 prize package including a fully furnished home in Broadbeach Waters on the Gold Coast, a Toyota Prado Kakadu, a Sea Ray sport boat, and $1 MILLION DOLLARS in gold* bullion.

To discover all the prize inclusions or to buy your tickets, go to materlotteries.com.au. Terms and conditions apply. This is a ticket that could be your Win of a Lifetime, and you will be supporting a great cause too.

Check out the prize package on Better Homes and Gardens on 28th November, from 7pm, as architect Pete Colquhoun takes you through the home.

The lucky winner will receive their life changing phone call on 24th December, 2025, and you never know—it could be you!

* References to gold bullion are descriptive of the prize and factual spot price of gold bullion only and do not constitute financial advice or a representation of future value


mater Queensland
Prize Home
$7 MILLION WIN OF A LIFETIME!
$1 MILLION
INCLUDES $1M IN GOLD BULLION!

better stockists

[PLANNING A TRIP TO THE SHOPS? HERE'S OUR ROUND-UP OF PRODUCTS]

YOUR SHOPPING DIRECTORY

Amazon amazon.com.au
BIG W bigw.com.au
Bunnings bunnings.com.au
Christmas Warehouse christmaswarehouse.com.au
Etsy etsy.com/au
Florabelle Living florabelle.com.au (wholesale)
Homecraft Textiles homecrafttextiles.com.au
Kmart kmart.com.au
Lincraft lincraft.com.au
Officeworks officeworks.com.au
Spotlight spotlightstores.com

AUSSIE CHRISTMAS, P30

Shopping details

Florabelle Living Vixen & Velvet collection is sold wholesale. Find the collection at various retailers such as Papier D'Amour, NSW, The Prop House Qld, Blue Illusion, Vic.

SLEIGH MY NAME, P48

Project supplies

Bunnings Selleys Kwik Grip spray adhesive, 150g, $11.45. **Officeworks** Born jumbo pom poms, six pack, $7. **Spotlight** Mid-weight cotton or linen, from $12/m. Crafters Choice A3 kraft board, $4.50. Jolly & Joy velvet craft ribbon, $5.

CUT-IT-OUT, P74

Project supplies

Spotlight Sculpey III Clay, 57g, $6. Sculpey Clay Tool Starter Set, $18. Wiltshire fondant rolling pin, $12. Kaisercraft embossing tool, $6. Ribtex 7mm jump rings, $4.50. Ribtex long nose flat pliers, $13. Berisfords swiss velvet ribbon, 22mm wide, $9.50/m. **Target** Anko Candle Soy Wax, 300g, $6. Candle wicks with metal base, 30 pack, $3. Anko Candle Making Dyes, $7.

POSH PALETTE, P92

Project supplies

CHALK-FINISH ORNAMENTS, P98

Find shatterproof tree ornaments at Amazon, BIG W, Kmart and Spotlight. **Bunnings** UNi-PRO Plaster of Paris, 1kg, $7.45. **Spotlight** Pebeo Studio acrylics paint, 100ml, $12. Semco Everyday double-sided ribbon, 3 metres, $2.25.

GIFT TOPPERS, P98

Officeworks Born A4 cardstock in metallic, 22 pack, $14. **Spotlight** Semco A4 cardstock in glitter, 25 pack, $7. Fiskars utility knife, $15. Fiskars bone folder, $9. Simplicity gold cord, $2.50 per metre.

VELVET LEAF WREATH, P98

Bunnings Prestige 26mm P20 raw pine mushroom knob, $3.51. **Homecraft Textiles** Acrylic felt, 100cm wide, $11.99/m. Stretch velvet, 150cm wide, $14.99/m. **Officeworks** X-Press It A4 double-sided adhesive sheet, five pack, $22. **Spotlight** Vivaldi 18-gauge 45cm cloth stem wires, 12 pack, $6. Vivaldi Blossoms florist wire, 113g, $9. Shamrock Craft 350mm foam wreath form, $13. Ribtex Play Jewels medium wood beads, pastel mix, 125g, $20. Berisfords 22mm swiss velvet ribbon, $9.50/m; 36mm wide, $16/m. Birch double-tipped marking pen, $16. Klasse pinking shears, $36. Crafters Choice low temperature glue gun, $11.

ACCORDION BELLS, P99

Officeworks Born A4 cardstock in metallic, 22 pack, $14. **Spotlight** Semco A4 cardstock in glitter metallic, 25 pack, $7. Fiskars utility knife, $15. Fiskars bone folder, $9. Simplicity 16mm gold cord, $2.50/m. Ribtex Play Jewels gold 10mm beads, $4.75.

STAR TREE TOPPER, P100

Find assorted shatterproof tree ornaments at Amazon, BIG W, Kmart, Spotlight and specialist Christmas stores. **Amazon** YYCRAFT pack of six shatterproof finial drop 5-inch Icicles Christmas ornaments, $27.71. **Bunnings** UNi-PRO Plaster of Paris, 1kg, $7.45. **Christmas Warehouse** Six 18cm shiny red and green textured Icicle finials, $16.99. **Etsy** Crystalstore 35mm wood half split balls, five pieces, $4.72. **Spotlight** Pebeo Studio Acrylics, 100ml, $12. Arbee wooden 30cm dowel rods, 10 pack, $7. Craftsmart balsa circles, 10 pack, $6. Ribtex Mixed Media 50mm beechwood ring, $6.50. Plain velvet velour, 148cm wide, $30 per metre. Vivaldi Blossoms florist wire, 113g, $9. Crafters Choice low-temperature glue gun, $11.

TOPPERS & TRIMMINGS, P122

Project supplies

Amazon BetterJonny colourful jute twine, 12 x 30-metre rolls, $16.99.

STAR BRIGHT, P126

Spotlight Craftsmart balsa sheet, $8. Arbee A4 felt sheets, $1.75 to $2.50 each. Fiskars utility knife, $15. Gorilla Super Glue Micro Precise Gel Clear, 5.5g, $17. Fiskars circle hand punch, 0.16cm, $17.

NORDIC NICETIES, P126

Amazon Homocono large 50mm wood balls, 10 pieces, $22.29. **Bunnings** ScotchBlue Painter's Tape, $9.99. Boyle Metallic Collection Acrylics, four 22ml tubes, $12.94. Boyle LENi Decorator Acrylics, 10 x 20ml tubes, $19.96. Boyle Pastel Collection Luxe Acrylics, six 22ml tubes, $14.46. UNi-PRO Foam Brushes, four pack, $3.90. Everhang 4mm brass screw eyes, 25 pack, $3.

WOODS & STRINGS, P126

Spotlight Arbee 40mm wood ring beads, five pack, $5. DMC Perle 5 cotton thread in various colours, $10 each. Gorilla Super Glue Micro Precise Gel Clear, 5.5g, $17. Crafters Choice 8mm Glass Pearl Bead Kit, 600 pack, $18. Ribtex 8mm round wood beads, 50 pack, $4. Simplicity four-colour tassel fringe, 45mm x 90cm, $11.

A STAR IS BORN, P126

Spotlight Craftsmart balsa sheet, 1.3mm thick, 285x300mm, $8. Fiskars utility knife, $15. X-Press It Clear Gel Glue, 125ml, $15. **Lincraft** DMC Perle 5 Variations cotton thread in various colours, 25 metres, $12.

SIMPLY HANDSOME, P127

Amazon Woodpeckers spools, pack of 25, $27.37. Leona Co wooden clothes pins, 50 pack, $14.99. **Etsy** Search for 'ticking ribbon', 'grain sack ribbon' or 'linen ribbon' for wider ribbons. Search for '5mm grosgrain ribbon with stitching' for ribbon to make a loop. **Spotlight** X-Press It Clear Gel Glue, $15. Jolly & Joy ribbons in ticking stripe or gingham, 3 metres, $4–$7. Arbee Mini Pegs, $5. ■

PRIVACY NOTICE

This issue of *Better Homes and Gardens* is published by Are Media Pty Limited (Are).

Are may use and disclose your information in accordance with our Privacy Policy, including to provide you with your requested products or services and to keep you informed of other Are publications, products, services and events. Our Privacy Policy is at www.aremedia.com.au/privacy/. It also sets out how you can access or correct your personal information and lodge a complaint.

We disclose your personal information offshore to our joint venture partners, service providers and agents. It is not practicable to specify all countries to which we may disclose your personal information. The countries your personal information will be disclosed to include New Zealand, the USA and the Philippines.

In addition, this issue may contain Reader Offers, being offers, competitions or surveys. Reader Offers may require you to provide personal information to enter or to take part. Personal information collected for Reader Offers may be disclosed by us to service providers assisting Are in the conduct of the Reader Offer, and to other organisations providing special prizes or offers that are part of the Reader Offer. An opt-out choice is provided with a Reader Offer. Unless you exercise that opt-out choice, personal information collected for Reader Offers may also be disclosed by us to other organisations for use by them to inform you about other products, services or events or to give to other organisations that may use this information for this purpose.

If you require further information, please contact Are's Privacy Officer either by email at privacyofficer@aremedia.com.au or mail at Privacy Officer, Are Media Pty Limited, 54-58 Park Street, Sydney NSW 2000.

Prices are approximate and a guide only.

TOP PICKS

CHECK OUT OUR PICKS OF THE MONTH TO SEE WHAT'S NEW, WHAT'S HOT AND WHAT'S IN STORE NOW!

WATTLE IT BE?

Both practical and pretty, Bell Art's Glowing Wattle serving trays bring a burst of golden charm to your table. The trays are made in Sweden using FSC-certified birch coated with Melamine, and are dishwasher- and food-safe. The colourful image is a work by the late Meryl Bell.

bellart.com.au

CLEARNET ENCLOSURES AND HAPPY CATS

This Christmas, let your cats safely enjoy the outdoors while you relax. Catmax Clearnet enclosures are sleek, secure and almost invisible, so won't affect the look of your home or garden. And they help your pets stay safe and content, even when you're away on holidays.

catmax.com.au

SHOPPING SPREE

Zebrano offers more than 50 designer fashion labels from New Zealand, Australia and beyond. The collection has a focus on quality and provides flattering fits for sizes 14 and up. Treat yourself to an outfit for the festive season!

zebrano.com.au

THE STABLE SCOOTER

Australian firm Lotus Blake is a leader in mobility scooter design and says its Patented Balance Technology makes its scooters 200 per cent more stable than others. This even weight distribution helps scooter wheels stay on the ground, even on a sideways slope. Wow. So many advanced features. You want this.

scootercity.com.au

BUILD YOUR CREATIVE ESCAPE

Need more room? Cabin Life's solid timber cabin kits are affordable, durable and quick to install. You can DIY or have one of our teams install it for you. Either way, it can turn your backyard into a new creative space.

cabinlife.com.au

SO NATURAL
— Company —
AUSTRALIA

Personal care formulated for the family with pure essential oils and no chemical fragrances.

sonaturalcompany.com.au

GOLF&TOURS

Join our Women's Luxury Golf Tuition Tours

www.golfandtours.com

Cabin Life
Creative Spaces for everyday living

DIY or Installed | Delivered Australia Wide | Wide Range of Designs

Premium Nordic Spruce Log Cabins

from $9,490

enquire now

0493 553 143

cabinlife.com.au

"I'm not worried anymore"

Now it's purr-fectly safe to let your cats play outdoors.

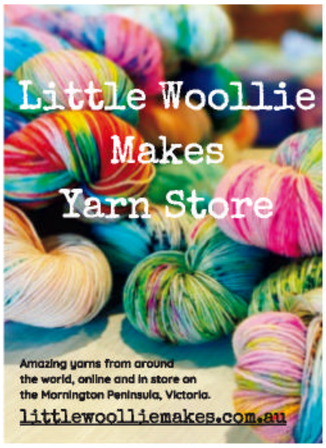
HAPPY & HEALTHY
CATMAX.

Catmax Clearnet enclosures are for cat owners who want to provide their pets with the freedom to explore while keeping them safe.

- Secure and Durable
- Customisable Designs
- Enhanced Visibility
- Expert Installation

Guaranteed peace of mind for 10 years

catmax.com.au



Little Woollie Makes Yarn Store

Amazing yarns from around the world, online and in store on the Mornington Peninsula, Victoria.

littlewoolliemakes.com.au

Future has arrived

Lotus Blake
Sureness in Quality

200% more stable. **You are Safe**
Fully independent suspension
Ultra efficient use of Power
Standard size long life tyres
Safe low cost SLA batteries
Proven Durable + Reliable
Australia wide delivery
Competitive rates
Warranty + Parts
Free info Pack

$2990

Scooter City
☎ 1800 726 683
Call a phone that answers

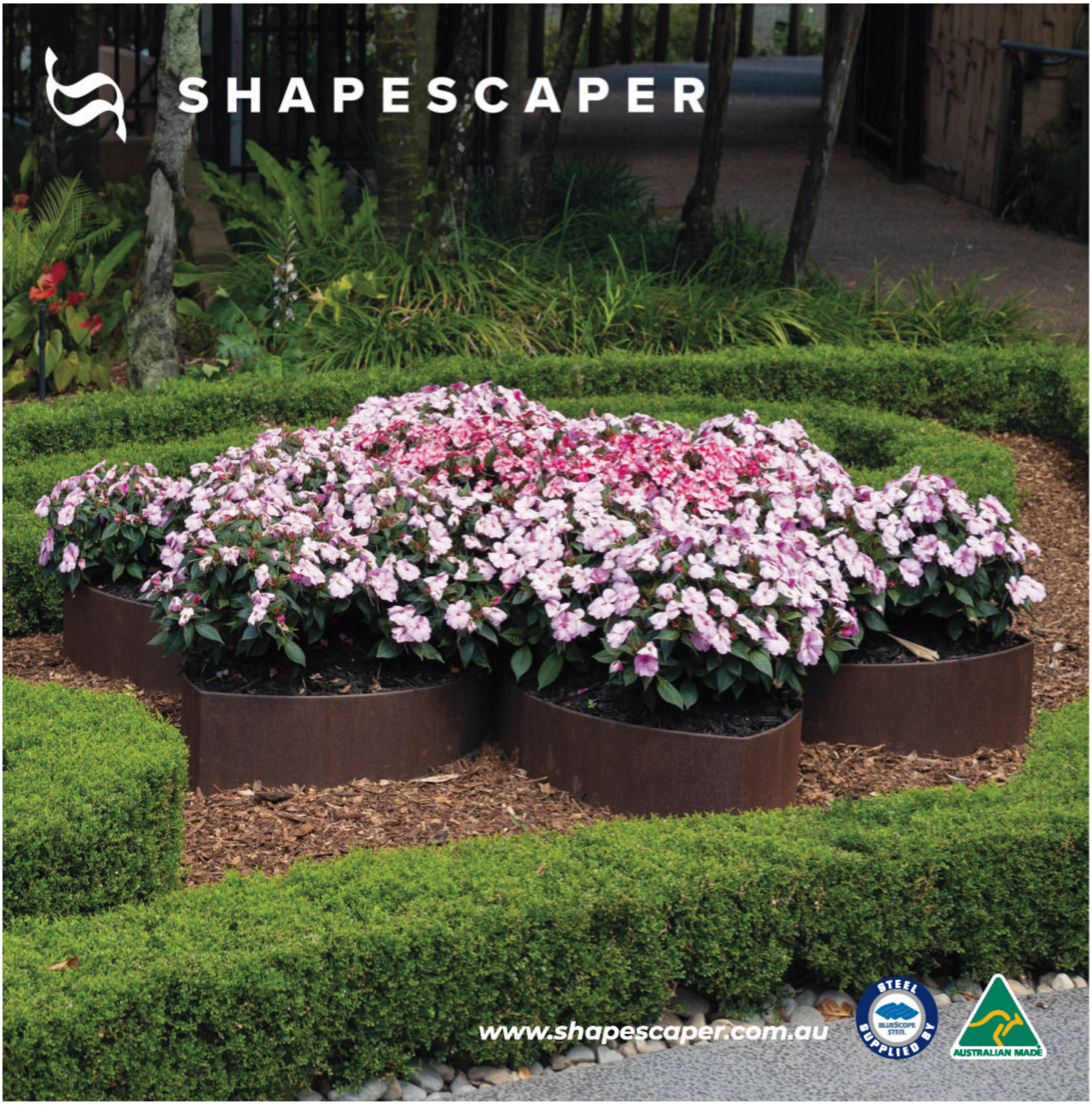
Real Wonders.

THIS IS **REAL COUNTRY**, COME SEE FOR YOURSELF.

visitrealcountry.com.au

Real Country. COONAMBLE GILGANDRA WARRUMBUNGLE feel new south wales

WARRUMBUNGLE Region



SHAPESCAPER

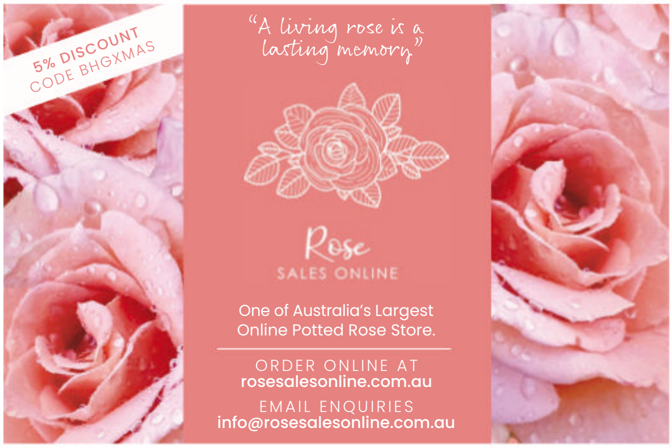
www.shapescaper.com.au

STEEL SUPPLIED BY BLUESCOPE STEEL

AUSTRALIAN MADE

THE YARN STORE
DARLING DOWNS

0403 162 625
admin@theyarnstore.com.au
theyarnstore.com.au



5% DISCOUNT
CODE BHGXMAS

"A living rose is a lasting memory"

Rose
SALES ONLINE

One of Australia's Largest
Online Potted Rose Store.

ORDER ONLINE AT
rosesalesonline.com.au
EMAIL ENQUIRIES
info@rosesalesonline.com.au

First time
AU customers
get 10% off
code bhgten

Fibre tools for
every budget

theluckyewe.com

THE LUCKY EWE
IT'S ALL ABOUT THE WOOL

TO ADVERTISE CONTACT BETTERHOMESANDGARDENSDIRECTORIES@AREMEDIA.COM.AU

A gift of joy!

swingz n thingz

swingz.com.au

Swings for all ages 0414 551 895

Australian made since 1993

Salamanca Wool Shop

All Things Wool. For Fashion, Warmth & Comfort.

Indulge your creativity

Yarns | Patterns| Needles

Craft Accessories

Visit us in store or online

69 Salamanca Pl, Battery Point, Tas 7004

P: 03 6234 1711 M: 0439 167 699

salamancawoolshop.com

zebrano

designer fashion

zebrano.com.au

sizes 14+

Wagner's ROSE NURSERY

The best selection of potted and bare root roses

Australian agent for David Austin, Delbard, Barni and Brundrett roses

wagnersrosenursery.com.au - ph 08 87393321

Reclaim Your Outdoor Space - Block Sun, Wind, Rain & Insects!

Custom-Made Outdoor Blinds Delivered to Your Door

INSTANT QUOTE

ozriteblinds.com.au

Ozrite OUTDOOR BLINDS

GARDENBAY WINDOWS

Your own indoor garden

Gain light space and transform your home in one easy step with no fuss or mess!

It fits inside your existing window frame

Available throughout Australia

www.gardenbay.com.au

Aust Wide Free call... **1800 811 635**

Kitchens • Bathrooms • Laundries • Living Rooms

Nordic spaces for the Australian lifestyle
DIY kits or built for you

Get **free** cabin underfloor insulation by quoting BHG126

SELECT HAUS
Cabins, glasshouses, saunas, playhouses and more
selecthaus.com.au selecthaus_aus

PATIOS WHOLESALE
www.patioswholesale.com.au
Australia's reliable supplier of DIY Patio, Carport & Pergola Kits 02 8020 5640
MADE FOR GOLDEN AFTERNOONS

Australia's Premier Source for Native Floral Gifts
BELL ART
BELLART.COM.AU
0402 030 953

Wobble-Tee
Water Efficient Sprinklers
AUSTRALIAN MADE

Wobble-Tee
Large Area Domestic

Clever Drop
Small Area Domestic

RolaRain
NEW!
Large Area - suited to parks, gardens, sporting fields and industrial application.

CELEBRATING 27 YEARS
- Low pressure sprinklers 5 to 40psi.
- Average Flow rate of 4 to 10 LPM.
- Removable screen filter allows use with dam or river water.

Available from leading hardware stores and rural retailers.

Wobble-Tee-Sprinklers
T. 02 4975 3222 | www.wobble-tee.com.au

BUY DIRECT FROM THE MANUFACTURER & SAVE MONEY
Picket
WALLMax
Automation
Newington Edge
Louvre
Glass
Boundary
ColorMAX BOUNDARY FENCING
Manufactured from Colorbond
STEEL SUPPLIED BY BLUESCOPE STEEL
Aluminium TimberSLAT

HELPING FENCE AUSTRALIA SINCE 1970
Dunn & Farrugia
FENCING AND GATES
HEAD OFFICE / MANUFACTURING
44 Preston Street PENRITH
02 4731 6974

TRADE & RETAIL ENQUIRIES WELCOME
ALBION PARK
DUBBO
CARDIFF
MINCHINBURY
NORTHERN BEACHES
NOWRA
QUEANBEYAN
RIVERSTONE
SMEATON GRANGE
WEST GOSFORD

www.dunnandfarrugia.com.au

better experiences

[RACHEL IORFINO HITS THE CHRISTMAS MARKETS.]

1

Martin Place Christmas Market

Thu–Sat, Nov 27–Dec 20, Martin Place, Sydney, NSW. Free entry.

If you're a Sydneysider, Christmas isn't complete without a trip to the Martin Place Christmas tree. This year, stop off at the Christmas Market as well to buy gifts for your loved ones (and a few sweet treats for yourself). Grab a bite to eat at the hot food stalls or the many nearby restaurants.

2

Jingle All The Bay

Sat, Nov 29, Sandgate Town Centre, Sandgate, Qld. Free entry.

This community celebration brings thousands to the main street of seaside Sandgate in Brisbane's north. Visit for an evening filled with shopping, rides, musical entertainment and, of course, a visit from Santa. Stay a little longer to watch the spectacular Christmas Street Parade kicking off at 7.30pm.

Twilight Christmas Markets

Sat, Dec 6, Goldfields Arts Centre, Kalgoorlie, WA. Free entry.

WA seldom gets to see snow, but at the Goldfields Arts Centre you may be in luck! Head to the Kalgoorlie Twilight Christmas Markets for their famous snow sessions. Enjoy fun arts and crafts, roaming entertainment, and lots of live music to keep you in the festive spirit.

3

4

Ballarat Farmers Twilight Christmas Market

Fri, Dec 19, North Gardens Reserve, Lake Wendouree, Ballarat, Vic. Free entry.

Get Christmas gifts for all your humans and pets, along with all the fresh berries you need for a trifle at the final Friday of the Ballarat Farmers Market. Expect your favourite regular stallholders, along with Christmas specials, gift packs and festive foods.

SCAN ME
Scan the QR code to find out more details.

Other gift stops

Salamanca Market, Hobart, Tas
Every Saturday.

The Rocks Christmas Markets, Sydney, NSW
Fri–Sun, Dec 5–21.

Warrnambool Christmas Markets, Warrnambool, Vic
Sun, Dec 7, 14, 21. ■

Prices are approximate and a guide only.

CROSSRAY
INFRARED BBQ

CROSSRAY YOUR WAY

There's a Crossray outdoor kitchen for every Aussie backyard.

CROSSRAY.COM.AU

Design your perfect outdoor kitchen with Crossray — built to last, tailored to your space, and powered by advanced infrared technology for outstanding cooking performance. Choose your size, style, gas or electric — to create the ultimate outdoor cooking experience.

LEARN MORE

Better Homes and Gardens®

nobody knows homes better

Thinking about buying, selling, or investing? Better Homes and Gardens has always been here to inspire your home and lifestyle, now let us guide you through your real estate journey too.

We know homes – and we're here to help with your real estate needs too!

Learn your property's value in seconds

Scan to receive your FREE instant property report.

bhgre.com.au 1300 24 24 73